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PEARL RIVER DELTA



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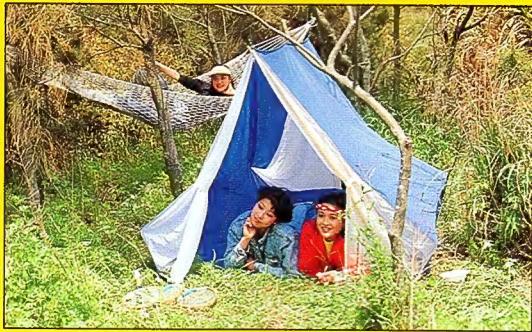
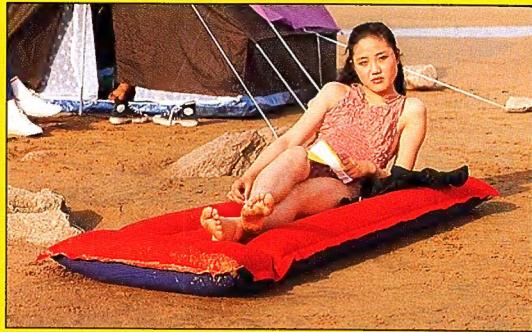
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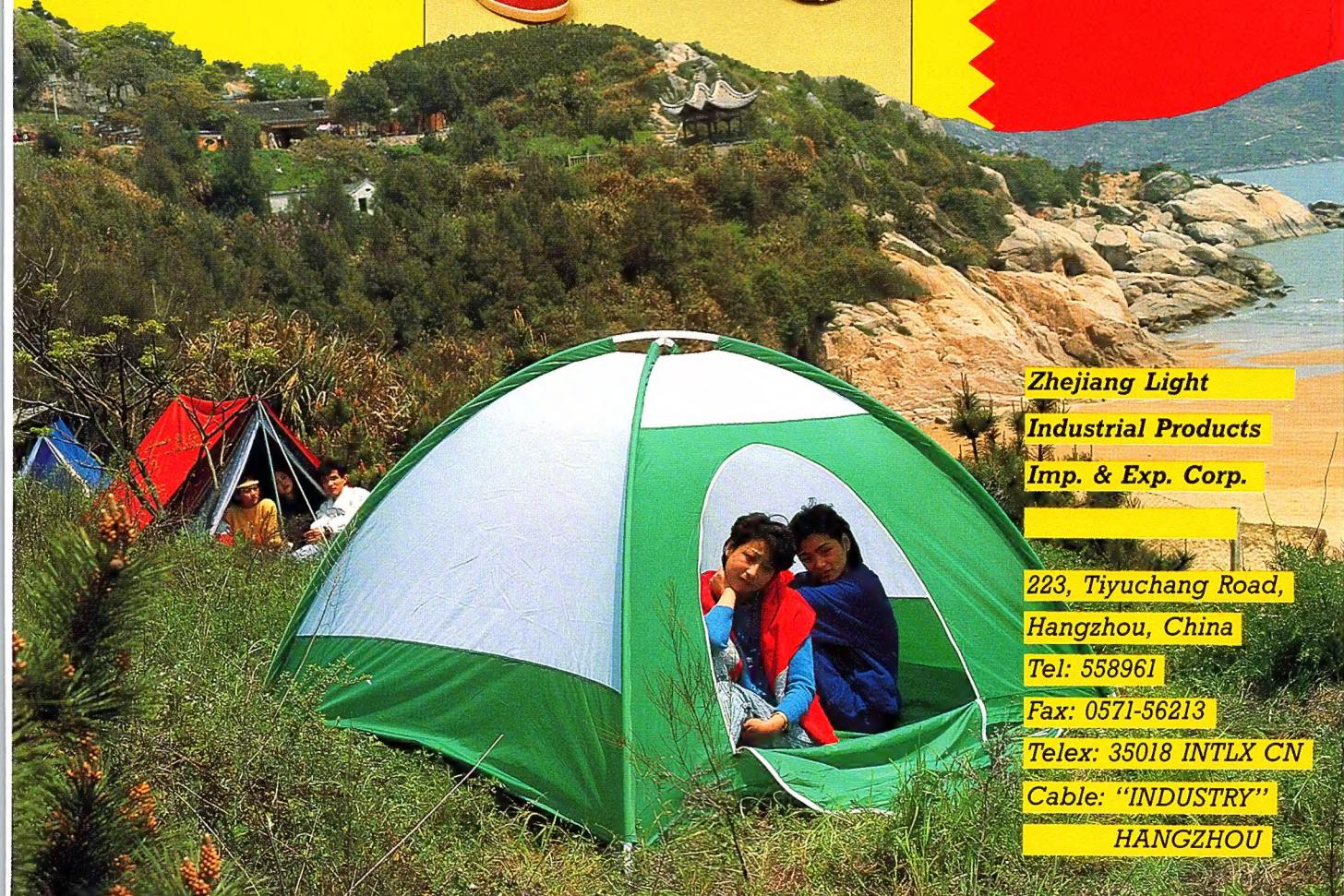


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EDITORIAL

Window on the World

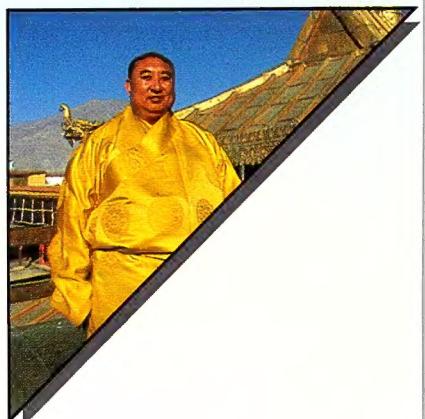
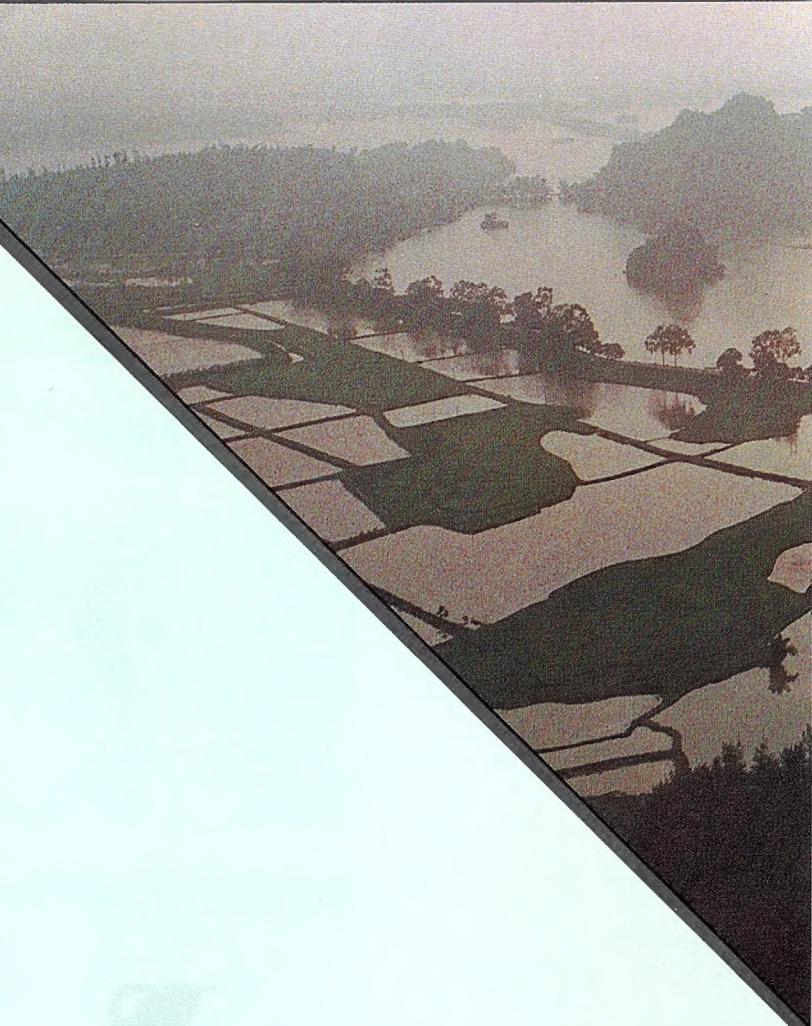
Thanks to its proximity to Hong Kong and Macau, its good and ever-expanding transport system and — not least — the policy of 'opening up' China to the outside world, the Pearl River Delta is becoming ever more important in touristic terms.

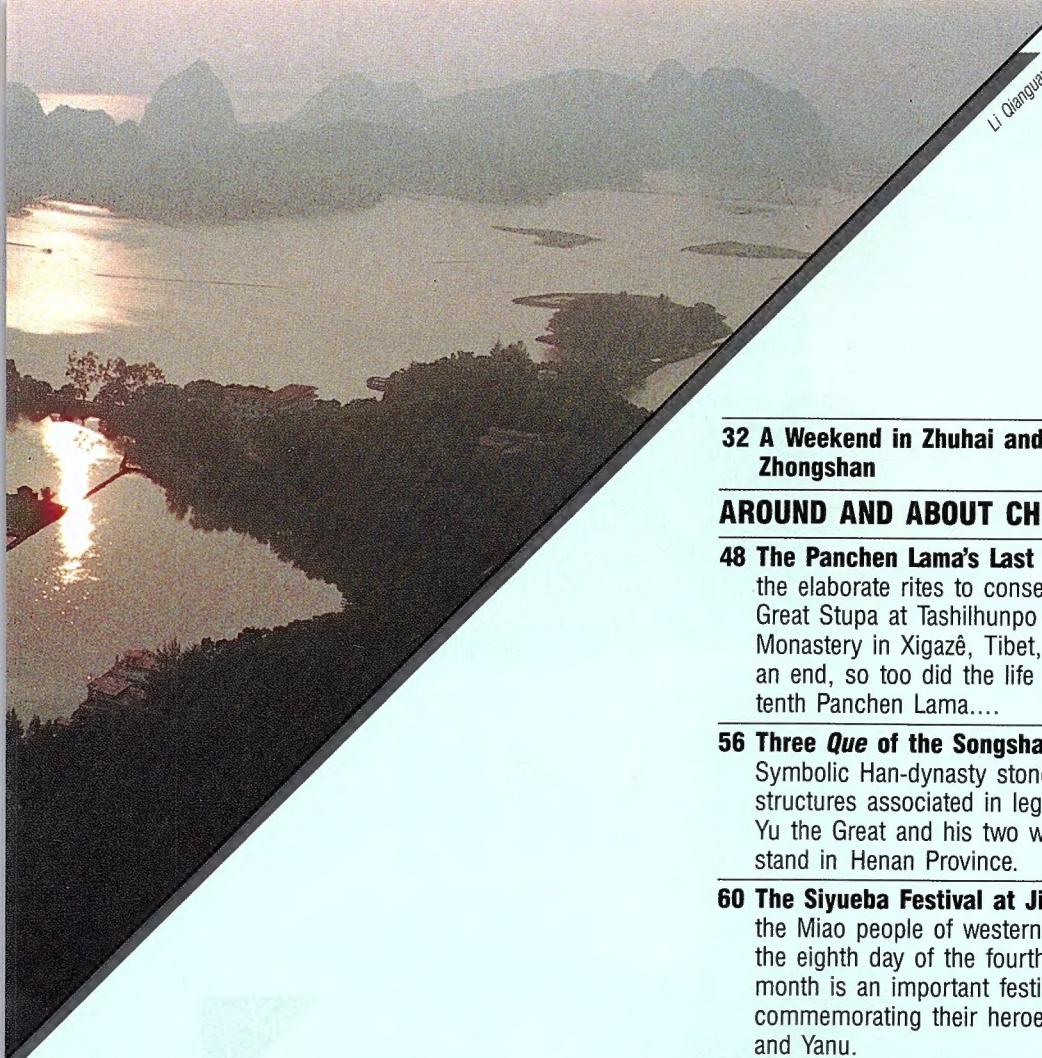
The range of experiences offered within its 10,000 square kilometres is remarkable. From the 2,800-year-old Guangzhou, capital of Guangdong Province, so successfully combining the contemporary with the traditional, to Shenzhen, the brash newcomer, whose skyscrapers and high-rise residential districts sometimes seem a mirror image of Hong Kong just across the border. From big-city bustle and international commerce to quiet villages deep in the green heart of the delta, a complex network of waterways which produces rice, fish, poultry, sugarcane, silk and fruit in abundance and where, despite the new prosperity, life remains essentially unchanged.

Unique to this part of China too are the many resort centres with excellent hotel facilities which act as a sort of overspill playground for residents of Hong Kong and Macau, places forming the lower two points of the isosceles triangle which is the Pearl River estuary (the third being Guangzhou). This means that the area has a host of attractions for all ages, from kids to senior citizens, and for the fun-seeking holidaymaker and the culture vulture alike. Our map gives just some of the main possibilities.

On a very different level, in January this year Tibet witnessed an event of deep symbolic and religious significance when the tenth Panchen Lama, Qoigy Gyaincain — second only to the Dalai Lama in the hearts of Tibetan Buddhists — presided over the consecration of the Great Stupa at Tashilhunpo Monastery in Xigazê, traditional seat for centuries of the Panchen Lamas. The Great Stupa was built to house the remains of his five predecessors, whose golden funeral stupas had been destroyed during the 'cultural revolution'. In retrospect, the imposing ceremony has taken on added meaning since it turned out to be the very last official act of the 51-year-old Panchen Lama; he died of a heart attack a few days later. We are honoured to publish an article by an eyewitness, present throughout the ceremony, as a tribute to the late Tibetan Buddhist leader.

Front cover: Contrasts — Yao girls take in a modern fashion show in Guangzhou (by Lam Kin Fai)





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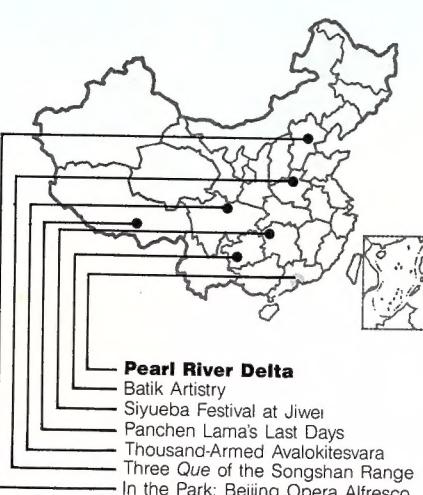
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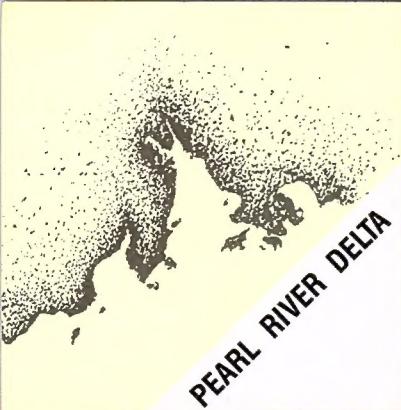
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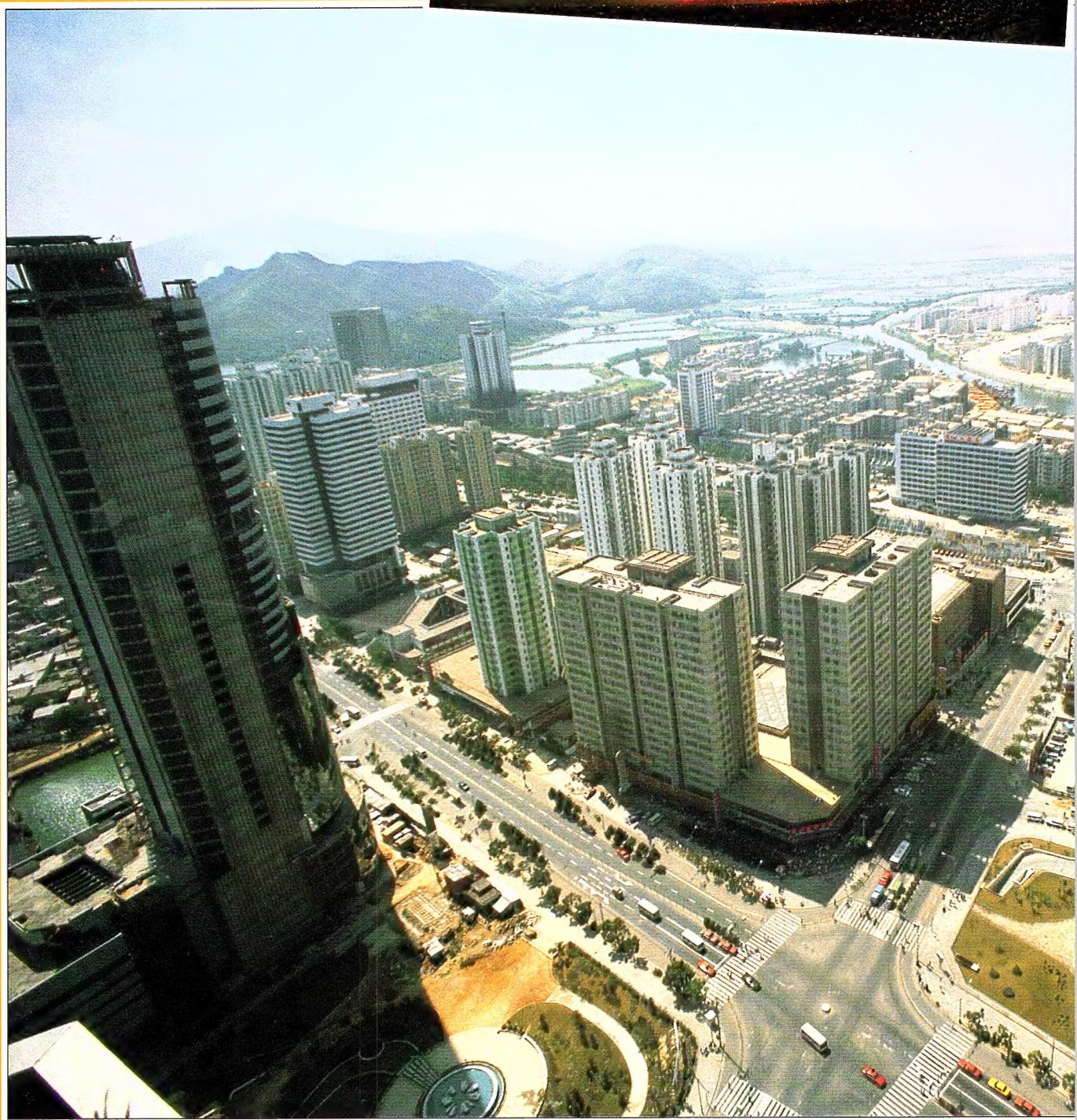
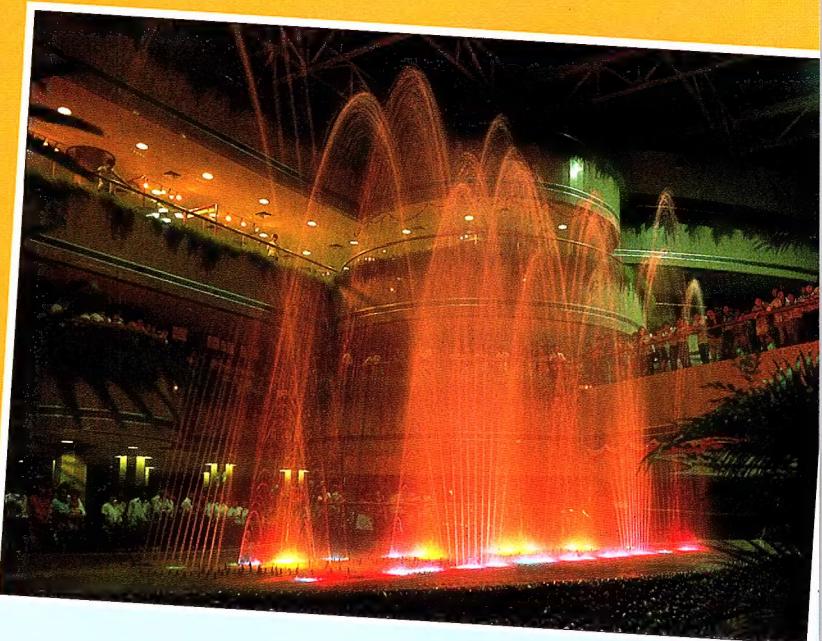
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The Pulse of Two Cities



While the Zhujiang or Pearl River empties itself without cease into the South China Sea, waves of new ideas and new things from nearby Hong Kong and Macau surge back up the delta as a result of China's policy of opening up to the outside world. Such novelties first affect Shenzhen and Guangzhou, the two major cities of the Pearl River Delta, before radiating out slowly like ripples on a pond to stimulate the rest of Guangdong Province.

Shenzhen: Infant Prodigy

Until the creation of its special economic zone (SEZ) in July 1979, Shenzhen was just a peaceful series of farms and small fishing villages. But since that fateful date, urban construction has gobbled up most of the older settlements, even the rice paddies, and replaced them with a forest of high-rises. The SEZ accounts for 327.5 square kilometres of Shenzhen's total of over 2,000 square kilometres. As workers flock in from inland provinces to take jobs in the new industries and participate in the economic blossoming of Shenzhen, its population has mushroomed from 20,000 to over 350,000 in just a few years.

Shenzhen is a short bus or train ride from Hong Kong. On emerging from the railway station, you find yourself faced with the sort of urban bustle you have just left behind; the din of traffic and human voices rises from the forecourt packed with taxis and minibuses. On either side of the straight, broad Jianshe Road you can see signboards in either simplified or traditional Chinese characters (the former used on the Chinese mainland, the latter by Chinese communities in Hong Kong, Macau and elsewhere), an indication of the city's importance as an intermediary. Restaurants along the main streets such as the Banxi (Fountain) and Siji Huoguo (Four Seasons Hot Pot) are constantly packed.

Although it still gives the impression of being raw and unfinished (rather like some of Hong Kong's new towns), this infant city has a most promising future, with a growing network of trade with both foreign and domestic markets.

Changing Townscape

Looking out over Shenzhen from the top of the International Trade Building in the heart of the city, forty-nine storeys up, you see numerous multi-storey buildings dotted all around to form a labyrinth of reinforced concrete. In the new quarters of Shenzhen, in particular, residential and industrial zones are separated according to a planned layout. The old fish farms, nurseries and market gardens have now been relegated to the city's outskirts.

Nevertheless, in the district of Luohu (Lo Wu), you can still spot a few islands of old farmhouses lurking between the high-rises, especially along Jiefang Road and Xinyuan Road. They seem to squat there, resolutely disregarding what is going on all around them — the bulldozers and the construction teams busily pulling down and putting up. And if you venture into the small back streets, you will find that many of the old houses with peeling

Shenzhen's musical fountain draws the crowds (1, by Cai Junwen). The heart of the new city above Jianshe Road (3) looks like this at ground level (4); you can make long-distance calls from booths outside the railway station (2).



2

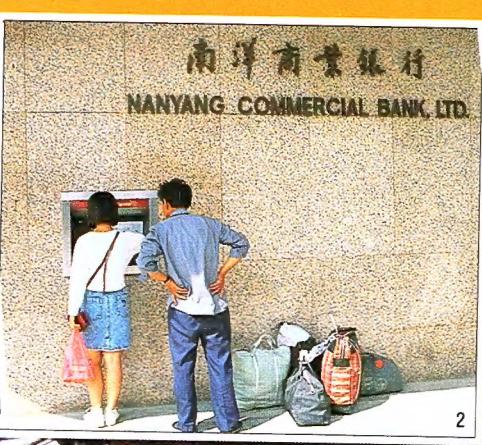


3



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5



walls have been fitted out as hairdressing salons or as bars with modern interiors and neon signs flashing outside to attract customers.

Both Ends of the Scale

The same sort of contrast is also evident in the people themselves and in the way they go about their business. You still frequently see peddlars from the outskirts of the city and from further afield — from Bao'an County and other parts of Guangdong Province — in the streets of Shenzhen. Many of them are itinerant hawkers who carry their produce around in baskets suspended from either end of a bamboo pole. Corn on the cob, papayas, bananas, green vegetables of all kinds, frogs, seafood, live turtles, live poultry, silk floss, blankets, and handicrafts are just some of the things they offer.

They sell their wares in competition with traditional shops and retailers, as well as more modern stores and shopping centres. Among the latter are a few in ultra-modern architectural styles with the added bonus of air-conditioning, a pleasure for visitors and locals alike in Shenzhen's sticky, sultry summer. Most of the shops in such centres are run by private individuals (as opposed to state-run shops) and mainly sell imported goods. Despite the high price, it seems that the people of Shenzhen have an unbounded enthusiasm for such imports — from Japan and elsewhere.

Advent of Electronic Gadgetry

With the establishment of the SEZ, economic investment has been increasing by leaps and bounds. This in turn has led to improved employment possibilities and boosted the local consumers' purchasing power. This and the presence of many joint ventures and foreign companies has brought with it a need for modern banking facilities.

Shenzhen has now adopted the concept of electronic money. All the credit cards generally accepted in Hong Kong can be used without any problem in Shenzhen's big hotels and major stores. Of course, as this is a very recent introduction, many of the people resident in Shenzhen, particularly more recent arrivals from the hinterland, are not yet familiar with credit cards, and any automatic transaction is likely to draw an interested crowd.

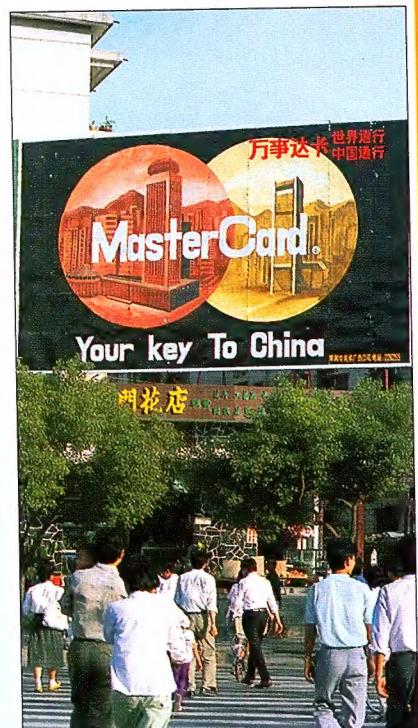
But Shenzhen's most popular spectacle is the musical fountain inside the International Trade Building, which is a rarity, perhaps even unique, on the Chinese mainland. Whenever it is time for a performance, people gather round to enjoy the spouting water columns and the marvellous interplay of colours, lights and flow patterns.

Neighbourly Influence

In the western part of Shenzhen at Shekou there is an amusement centre called Sea World based on a converted ocean liner. A pair of powerful binoculars is mounted there and you often see visitors gazing out to the opposite shore. If it is a clear day, you can make out Lau Fau Shan in Yuen Long in Kowloon's New Territories.

It is undeniable that Shenzhen residents are deeply interested in everything to do with Hong Kong. Magazines displayed at newsstands splash Hong Kong film and TV stars across their front covers, and posters and calendars feature these same well-known faces. Their fame is largely due to the fact that Shenzhen residents are able to receive Hong Kong's TV and radio stations, as well as watch the products of its film studios. And of course weekend holidaymakers and visiting relatives bring presents and tell stories which only serve to fuel the interest.

The traditional (1) and the contemporary (5) approach to selling. Modern banking makes its presence felt (2, 6). Posters of Hong Kong stars are everywhere (3) and Hong Kong itself is only across the bay (4).



An Ancient City Rejuvenated

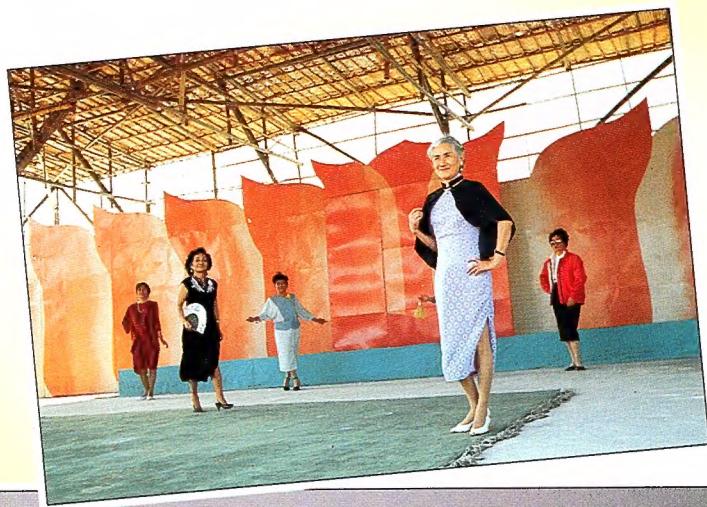
By contrast, Guangzhou can point to a history of 2,800 years and more. The biggest city in southern China, with a population of three million (greater Guangzhou has a population of around seven million), this is also the capital of Guangdong Province. It lies on the Pearl River around 140 kilometres north of Hong Kong.

Guangzhou has been a great trading port for hundreds of years, an outward-looking city. As far back as the Tang dynasty (618-907) more than 100,000 foreign traders and their families — mostly Arabs — lived in Guangzhou. They were followed in the sixteenth century by the Portuguese, who set up a trading post at the mouth of the delta at Macau, followed closely by merchants from other European nations. As China's only officially approved foreign trading port from 1685 onwards, this was the site of a special concession area in the south of the city where foreign traders established their 'factories', a mixture of office and residential complex. The European style of architecture is still visible today on Shamian Island.

In modern times, Guangzhou was the very first of the fourteen coastal cities to be declared open to the world in 1984. Huangpu (Whampoa), the city's port thirty-five kilometres to the east, is home to China's largest merchant navy and is being expanded into a modern container port. As the home of the Chinese Export Commodities Fair, Guangzhou sees a twice-yearly influx of business executives from all over the world, eager to promote links with China. Small wonder that Guangzhou often seems rather like a sort of experimental theatre where traditional Chinese culture mingles with innovations from East and West to form something unique to this city in the forefront of China's economic reform policies.

Blending Old and New

Guangzhou's newest landmark is the Haiyin Bridge, the fourth constructed over the Pearl River. Similar in style to



San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge and open to traffic only since December 27 1988, it is 416 metres long and thirty-five metres wide. Its support pylons are fifty-seven metres high and it has the widest roadway of any bridge in China.

Another recently completed construction is the museum built to house the tomb of a king of Nanyue (a small independent kingdom of southwestern China dating from around the second century B.C., which was destroyed in 111 B.C. by the Western Han dynasty). Paradoxically, this museum containing ancient artefacts, burial objects, as well as an actual tomb chamber, is itself a unique example of modern architecture. It can be found on Jiefang Road North, just south of the China Hotel.

Its facade, of matte red sandstone, is reminiscent of the temples of ancient Egypt and Persia. The simple but stylized bas-reliefs suggest the close relationship between primitive mankind and nature — the sun, the moon, stars, fauna and flora. The square solidity of the structure is relieved by the insertion of shaped glass — a novel design born out of an old tradition and somehow symbolic of Guangzhou itself.

Fashion and Beauty

Beauty contests are very much in vogue worldwide, and Guangzhou's TV station took a giant risk in 1988 and sponsored one. Northern Chinese used to comment unfavourably on the girls of Guangdong Province along the lines that they look alright only when viewed from their slim and shapely rear. But all the entrants I saw at the Taiyangdao Marine Park who were being photographed in bathing suits for the competition were true beauties



Hopeful lovelies pose for China's first beauty contest (3) while women of older generations reveal their poise and sense of style (1, by Lam Kin Fai). Modern architecture in an old city: the new Haiyin Bridge (2), and the museum built over the tomb of a king of ancient Nanyue (4) (2, 3 and 4 by Peng Zhenge).

4



... from all angles! Though this was the first contest of its type ever held on the Chinese mainland, it turned out to be a sensational success. The final, which was televised live, drew a record viewing audience and the tall men (yes, men!) and women contestants won the hearts of many.

Nor is the current upsurge of popularity in fashion and beauty confined to the young. The older generation, especially in the urban areas, are keen to join in and make the best of their appearance. Even grandmothers are now seen staging fashion shows for their contemporaries in outfits they have designed and sewn themselves, many of them displaying the panache and elegance of professional models.

Let's Get Physical

The latest craze to hit Guangzhou is body-building, mainly among young men, although there are female body-builders in China too. There are more than a dozen private gyms in the city. Every afternoon at around four o'clock, white and blue-collar workers alike swarm to these places after work, leaving a sea of bicycles and motorbikes outside. In one gym I visited near the Cultural Park around twenty men were lifting weights, jaws clenched with effort, biceps bulging. Thus another discipline is taking its place alongside the traditional and perennially popular martial arts, which are still widely learnt and practised.

Another most unusual sight to greet my eyes on a recent visit to Guangzhou occurred at Yuexiu Park, the city's largest. The young people I saw posing there turned out to be taking a class in modern dance at the Guangzhou School of Dancing. It seems that the teachers often take their pupils out to the city's many scenic spots and parks where, after demonstrating the basic steps, they ask the class to improvize, to let themselves be inspired by the natural setting. Such an outdoor 'show' inevitably attracts a straggle of onlookers.



1



Modern Stagecraft

In recent years many intellectuals from other provinces have come to Guangdong seeking inspiration in their artistic endeavours. What they are actually seeking is probably exposure to new ideas and new ways of expressing and presenting them. For example, in the picture shown here, Liu Suola, Cheng Lin, Li Dandan and Hou Dejian (from left to right) are working together to produce an avantgarde opera which will present the traditional and the contemporary on one and the same stage.

The cry has gone out: 'Let there be no more distinctions between players and audience, between stage and stalls.' As a result, the performing area is continually being extended to eliminate the artificial barriers between performers and audience, forming an integrated whole where the audience response becomes part of the happening.

'Let there be no more fixed spotlights,' is another dictum. As a result, sets sprout spotlights from every nook and cranny to illuminate the stage from all directions and in all colours. The actors' performance is enhanced by variegated sound and light effects.

Since its inception, the Guangzhou TV station has been fully aware of such trends in the West and has made remarkable progress in only a few years. Abstract settings, sophisticated lighting systems and an open stage — all this represents a big step forward in the presentation of the dramatic and performing arts in China and is symptomatic of so many other developments in Guangdong's capital. 

Translated by Ren Jiazen

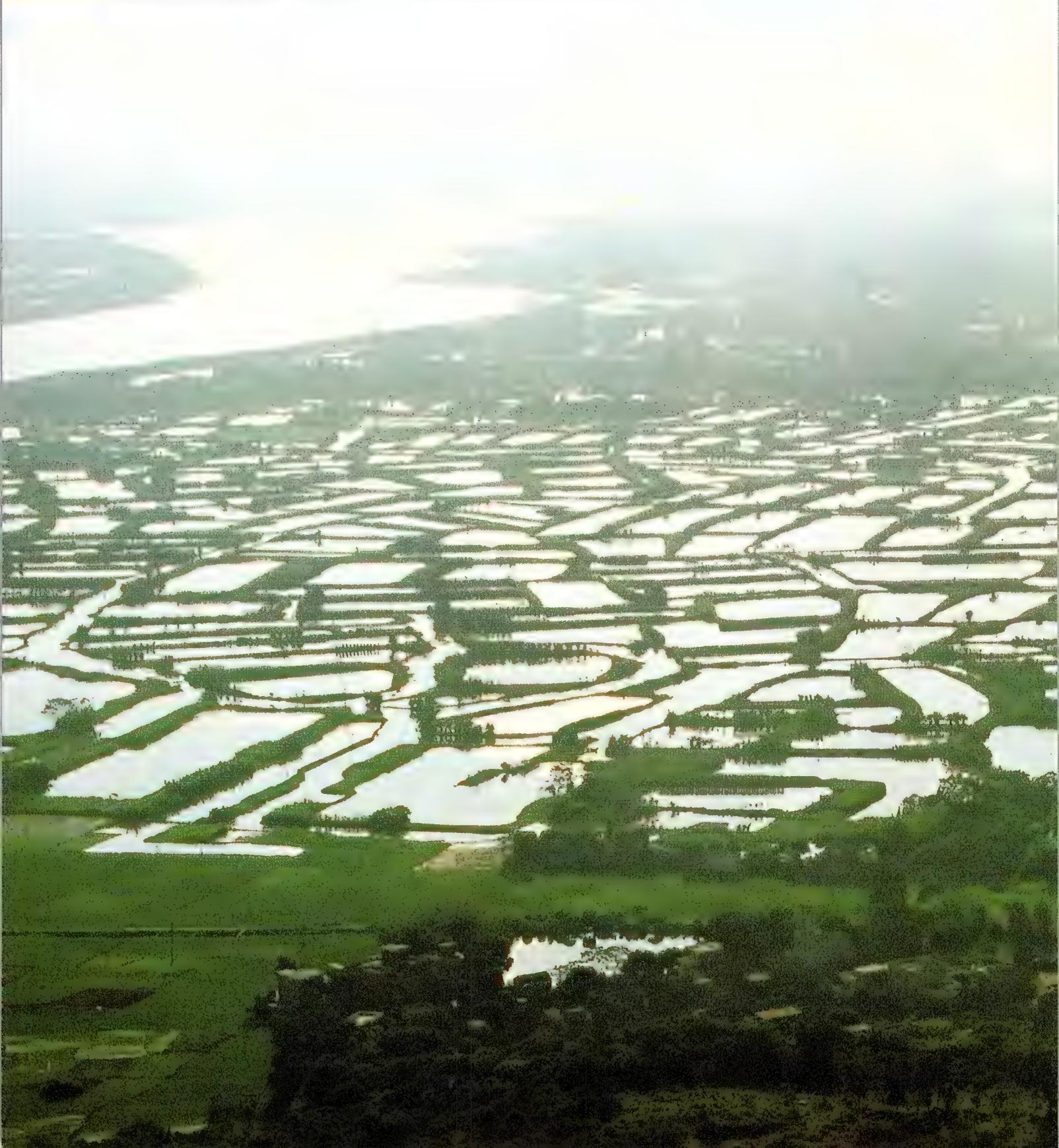
Avantgarde theatre (1) and modern ballet, in an up-to-date stage setting (2) and in the open air (4), reveal the trend in the arts (all by Peng Zhenge). The latest craze in Guangzhou — body-building (3, by Lam Kin Fai).





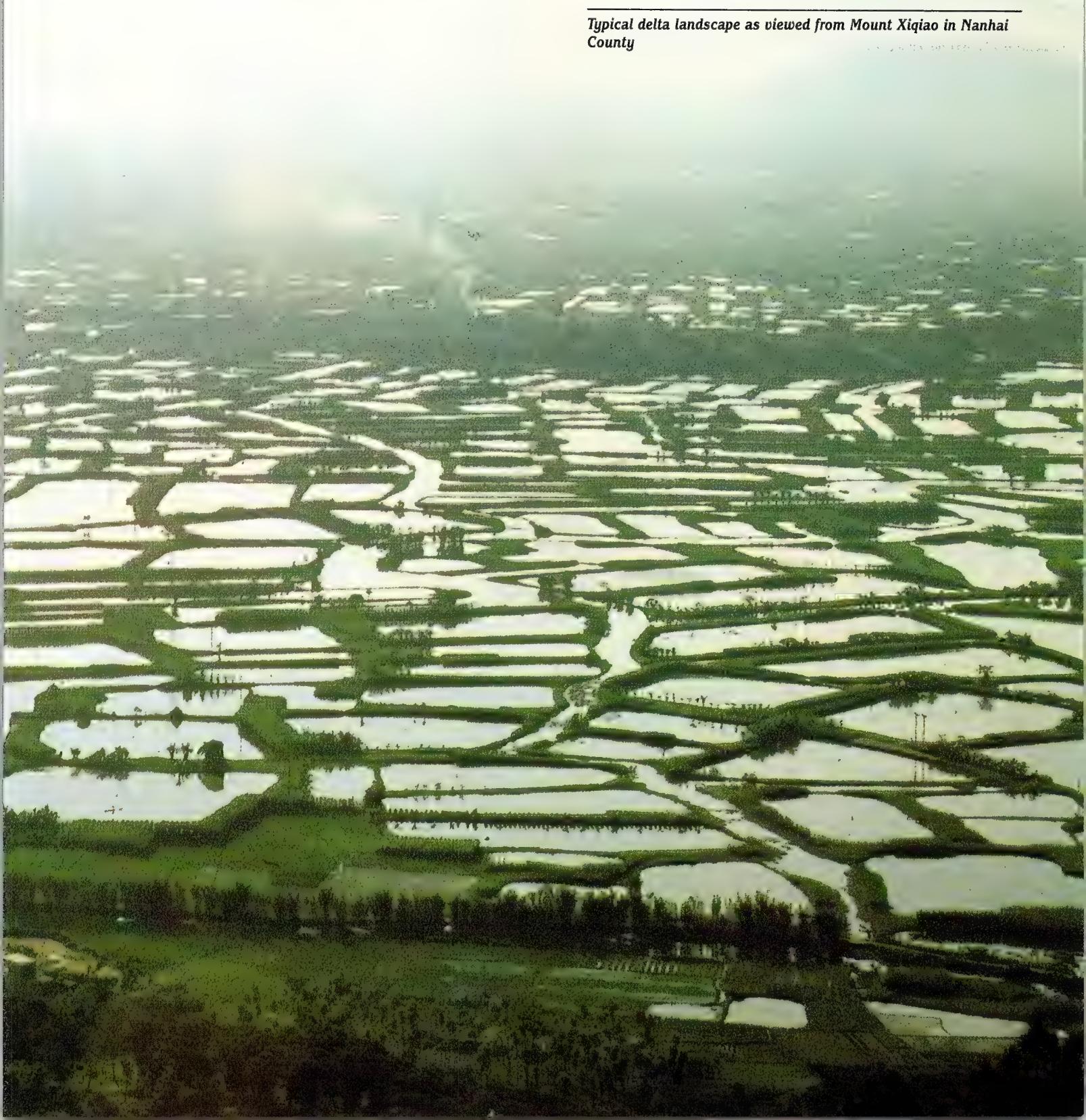
Counties in the Pearl River Delta

PHOTOS & ARTICLE BY PENG ZHENGE



The best-known of China's water districts is probably the one lying south of the River Yangtze, covering southern Jiangsu and parts of Zhejiang Province, which traditionally evokes a landscape of flat, lush land crisscrossed by narrow waterways and tiny bridges. But the Pearl River Delta in Guangdong Province is also a water-based world, although with different features. The volume of water flowing through the delta is very large and the river very wide, with a network of waterways and tributaries which are themselves of considerable size. This is probably why local residents say that they are going to 'cross the sea' instead of 'cross a river'. The subtropical climate, the abundant rainfall and the rich alluvial deposits have made this a high-yield agricultural area.

Typical delta landscape as viewed from Mount Xiqiao in Nanhai County



Developing Road Network

I started my circuit of the Pearl River Delta from Shenzhen, north of Hong Kong, by taking a minibus to Dongguan, a trip of about two hours. Dongguan is a thriving city heavily involved in the processing business in many sectors (textiles, garments, toys, electronics, metal, plastics, footwear, etc.) located on the main road to the provincial capital, Guangzhou. In the hotel that evening, I learned that the Machong Bridge in Dongguan County was to open officially to traffic the following day. It would be a grand ceremony with many guests from surrounding counties, as well as from Hong Kong and Macau; I decided to stay to watch.

Next day the carriageway over the bridge was empty, but the pavement on either side was bursting with people in holiday mood. From time to time they would crane their necks to see if anything was happening yet. One old man, probably growing tired of waiting, suddenly darted over the road to a great burst of laughter from the assembled crowd. The ceremony began soon after. Amidst the popping of firecrackers, the silk ribbon was cut and a group of lion dancers led a convoy of over one hundred vehicles across the bridge.



1

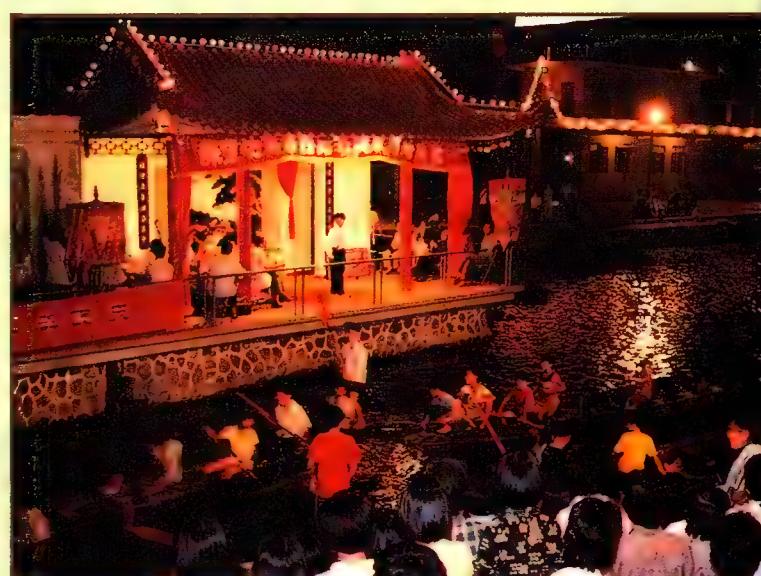


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According to the locals, Machong had been the last market town in Dongguan County to be still inaccessible by road. Now, with the completion of this bridge, it is possible to reach every township in the county by road. This is particularly important because of the amount of industrial products, fruit and vegetables exported to Hong Kong.

The maze of waterways in the delta has always posed problems for travellers not in boats. In the past, if you travelled by road from Guangzhou to Zhongshan, you had to make four ferry crossings, and it took more than four hours to cover only about one hundred kilometres. The major highway project in progress will eventually link Hong Kong/Shenzhen and Macau/Zhuhai with Guangzhou by efficient modern motorways.

In this delta where children grow up in the water (1), boats are still indispensable (4) – even for watching opera performances (3). An Overseas Chinese home in Shunde (2) (2, 3 and 4 by Yang Yaotang).



3



Complex Ecosystem

I continued to Guangzhou, where I spent the night. Next day I took a bus to the famous city of Foshan only twenty-eight kilometres to the southwest (although it can take a disproportionately long time to get there if the traffic is bad).

Foshan means 'Buddha Hill' and this was once a religious site with a history going back over 1,200 years. Five hundred years ago, Foshan was considered one of China's four great market centres, mainly due to its pottery, metalwork and other crafts. In the eighteenth century it was one of the largest cities in the world, with over a million inhabitants. Now, though considerably smaller, it is



known for its light industry and its ceramics, which can best be seen six kilometres away in the southern suburb of Shiwan.

Still, this bustling city shows no evidence of being a delta settlement, so I headed further to Nanhai County, which offers much more typical scenes. On both sides of the road stretch farmlands and fish ponds and waterways, many with small boats on them, snake across the fields. Here, as in Shunde and other counties in the rich and fertile heart of the delta region, the farmers have developed a complex system of agriculture. The land is divided up by embankments which help to control the abundant water. Rice and sugarcane is planted in the fields while on the embankments grow fruit trees, including mulberry trees, the leaves of which are used to feed the farmers' silkworms. Below the embankments lie ponds in which fish are raised. The ponds provide water and nutrients for the roots of the trees, which shed leaves, berries and insects into the ponds, thereby providing food for the fish. A complete and satisfying ecosystem! Nanhai County also raises great numbers of geese and ducks, as well as the curious breed of dog known as the Chinese shar-pei.

Travelling through the county, I saw a covered stage beside a water channel. I was told that every year at the Dragon Boat Festival, which takes place somewhere in June by the Gregorian calendar, local families come here by boat to listen to performances of Cantonese opera.

Heart of the Delta

Shunde County was my next goal. This place, famous for its fish and rice, can be considered the centre of the Pearl River Delta. Here the waterways form a complete communications network of their

Another characteristic of Shunde County is the number of Western-style houses there, a reminder that many of its 900,000 or so inhabitants have relatives abroad. I visited one house owned by a returned Overseas Chinese. The spacious main room held expensive teak furniture, a tall cabinet contained a collection of porcelain. Palms and mulberry trees grew in front of the window while, further away, a small creek bubbled by. However, the owner had set up a mini-bar in one corner of his drawing room, and there were other Western touches. It seems that this manner of combining the Chinese and Western approach to interior decoration is quite common in the locality.

Architecture Old and New

It is only natural that Chinese living overseas should feel nostalgic about their birthplace. I was advised to go and see another villa in the township of Xingtang built by a native of the county now residing in Hong Kong. The entrance to this villa called Langtao Dujia Yucun (Seaside Holiday Fishing Village) boasts an imposing arch topped with yellow glazed tiles. The doorkeeper gave me permission to go in and look around. The complex has a screen wall, an arched gateway, a zigzag corridor and tiny bridges — all elements of traditional architecture despite having been built with modern materials.

The best place to see the real thing, however, is Qinghui (Clear Sunlight) Garden, one of Guangdong's four famous gardens, in Daliang, Shunde's county town. This was originally the home of a Ming-dynasty scholar by the name of Huang Shijun over 360 years ago. Later, in the Qing dynasty (1644-1911), it was bought by one Long Yingshi, an official; it was this man's great-grandson who



4



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own: one-third of the county's area is in fact water. Many houses are built by the water's edge, and practically every family owns a small boat, as this is often still the only means of transport.

Shunde people are real water-rats. Children play in the water as a matter of course and learn to swim and row a boat at an early age. Small wonder that many of China's best swimmers come from Guangdong or that Shunde is the undisputed dragon boat race champion, both its men and women teams having dominated the national and international scene for years.

Quiet old shops (5) and traditional cemeteries (4) continue almost unchanged. The peach door at Shunde's Qinghui Garden (2) and latticework window (1) reflect a quest for beauty evident in the modern villa at Xingtang built in an ancient style (3).

reconstructed it after a visit to the wonderful gardens of Suzhou in Jiangsu Province. The present garden and its buildings, more than 180 years old, thus blend Suzhou design with that of Guangdong. The beams of the corridor leading to the so-called Boat House are carved with patterns of tropical fruits. Perhaps the most original feature is a door carved with over one hundred brightly painted, fist-sized peaches; the owner of the house must have been very fond of fruit, or maybe he was hoping for a particularly long life (the peach is a symbol of longevity) in which to enjoy this lovely place.

Daliang has retained its old flavour in many of its back streets and narrow lanes, as I discovered on my wanderings. Unchanged too is Shunde's culinary reputation. With its wealth of super-fresh ingredients, it is hardly surprising that the county has long had a name for its seafood, whether steamed lightly with ginger and spring onions or fried. But Shunde's cooks also produce other delights, notably the unusual fried water buffalo's milk.



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Jobs for Outsiders

Via Rongqi I continued by car along the Guangzhou-Zhuhai Highway to Zhongshan, now officially a city. I checked in at the International Hotel before going out to look around. I had been invited to Yakou, a nearby township, by a friend. As I was walking in that direction I heard frantic ringing of bicycle bells from behind; female factory hands were swarming out of their workplace at the end of their shift. I noticed that they did not speak Cantonese (the local dialect), since they had obviously only recently arrived from other provinces to work in Guangdong's rural factories. Nearly a hundred of these women, most of them young, were lodged in a former ancestral temple by the roadside.

I followed them inside. It was rather dark; each woman's private space was marked by a dim lamp, illuminating a bottle of scent, a mirror, a piece of embroidery, a colourful sheet. . . . While I was there, one woman packed her bags and said goodbye to her workmates. I was told that most of them only stay at the factory



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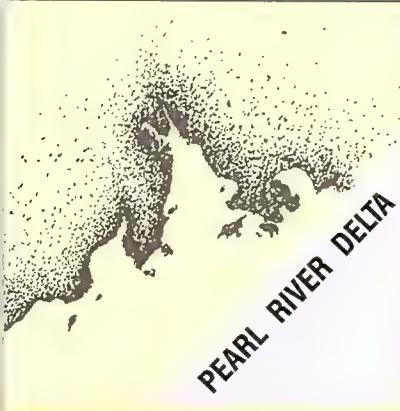
for one or two years, just long enough to amass money for their trousseau so that they can go back home and get married.

As I was walking back from my friend's house intending to take a bus to return to the city centre of Zhongshan, I heard the sound of piano music coming from a house. It was a little girl practising, her mother assiduously turning the sheets of music for her. Apparently, the Beijing Conservatory and Zhongshan's Cultural Centre have jointly founded a piano institute for children. It has received many applications from hopeful students, and piano lessons have become quite fashionable. How attitudes change!

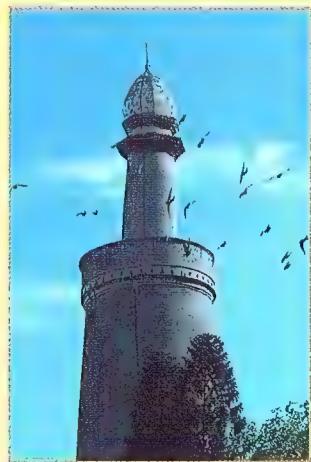
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Translated by Ren Jiazen

Zhongshan scenes: clever hoarding advertising a factory which makes window dummies (1, by Chan Yat Nin); the new craze (2); women workers flock from other provinces (3), leaving plenty of work for locals (5). Flower-sellers off Zhuhai on their way to the markets of Macau (4).



Tourist Map of Pearl River Delta



Tang-dynasty Huaisheng Mosque, Guangzhou (by Chan Yat Nin)



Mount Xiqiao, Nanhai (by Peng Zhenge)



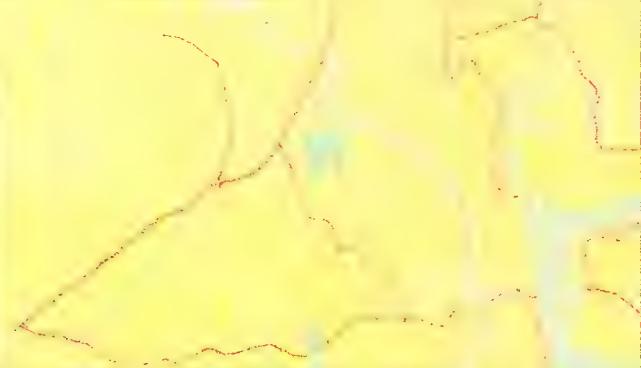
Shunfengshan Tourist Centre, Shunde (by Peng Zhenge)



Jun'an Waterway (by Peng Zhenge)



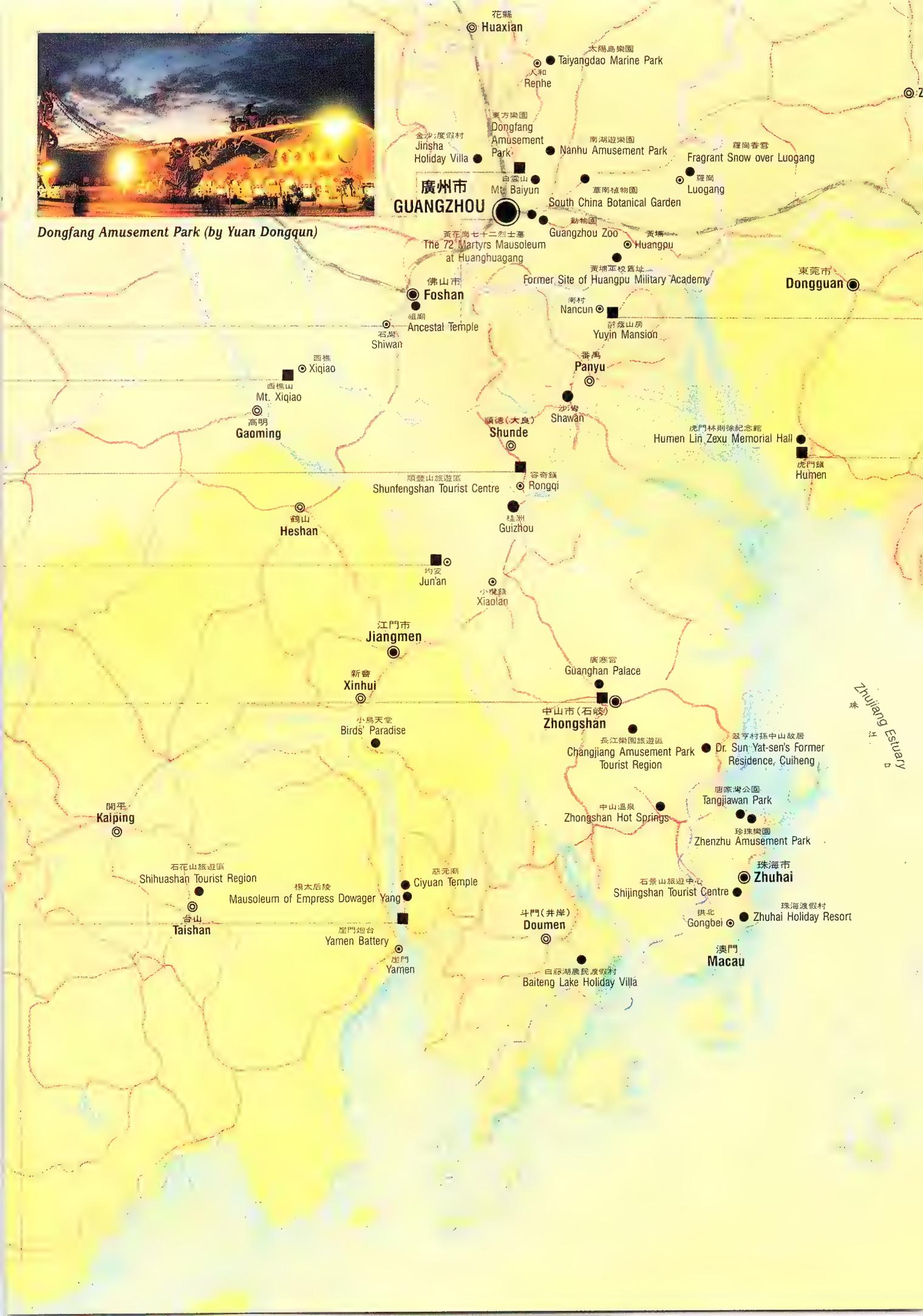
Qijiang Bridge, Zhongshan (by Chan Yat Nin)



Yamen Battery at Xinhui (by Peng Zhenge)



Dongfang Amusement Park (by Yuan Dongqun)



The Shishi (Stone Chamber) Cave on the crag of the same name is the largest in the area. It contains poems carved in the rock by more than ten renowned scholars of sundry dynasties. Since the cave is partly filled with water accumulating naturally inside the hill, you can view its eerie limestone formations from a boat. Other carvings, graffiti of the past, can be seen at Moya Cliff.

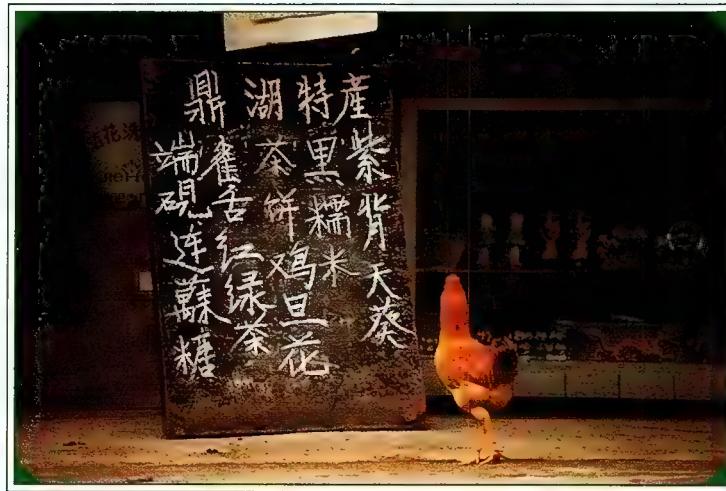
It was during the sixteenth century, in the Ming dynasty, that construction of temples, pavilions and other buildings started on a large scale. But the Star Lake itself is a recent

creation; only in the 1950s was it formed when an existing small lake was dammed to form a reservoir. Dykes in the form of twisting, twining causeways lined with graceful willows divide the lake into five parts, amounting to a total length of over twenty kilometres. Consequently, this is a great place for walking, although you can also hire boats to get around the lake and between the hotels to the north and the town centre to the south.

The seven crags are neither tall nor large, but they have their own charm, giving you the impression that you have stepped into a traditional Chinese landscape painting. Four of the crags are accessible by stone-slab paths, some straight and steep, some zigzagging. From the top of Langfeng Hill you can see Yuping (Jade Screen) Hill, aptly named as it half shields from view Shishi Hill and Tianzhu (Sky Pillar) Hill beyond. A pavilion crowns both the latter peaks. Looking down, you see the blue lake waters lapping at the foot of the crag. Beyond is Zhaoqing itself and beyond that the Xijiang (West River).

Little is left now to testify to Zhaoqing's two thousand years of history, although the city walls dating from the Southern Song dynasty (1127-1279) still stand north of the river wharf. But Zhaoqing once had illustrious residents in the shape of the last survivors of the Song dynasty on their flight south from the Mongol invaders.

Zhaoqing is also a good base for an excursion to Mount Dinghu, a summer resort less than twenty kilometres away. Rising to 1,004 metres above sea-level, the mountain



2



Zhaoqing's Seven Star Crags

PHOTOS & TEXT BY LAM KIN FAI



Prior to the Qing dynasty (1644-1911), Guangdong Province was considered a 'remote' area, being indeed thousands of kilometres from the northern centres of power. Nevertheless, the beauty spot known as Qixing (Seven Star) Crags north of Zhaoqing, some 118 kilometres west of Guangzhou, was well-known in the Central Plains over a thousand years ago and has often been compared with Hangzhou's West Lake.

The name 'Seven Star Crags' refers to a group of seven abruptly rising limestone pinnacles of the type seen in Guilin in Guangxi further to the northwest. Their layout resembles that of the seven stars in the Big Dipper constellation, hence the name. Surrounded by the limpid waters of the Star Lake, the pinnacles are famous for their caves and grottoes. Over many centuries, travellers have recorded their impressions of this lovely place in inscriptions on rocky walls and cliff-faces.

1





LEGEND	
●	City
◎	County town
○	Other town
▲	Peak
■ ●	Major tourist place
—	Railway
—	River
—	Road
—	Boundary of Economic Open Zone



Yuyin Mansion, Panyu County (by Chan Yat Nin)



Shajiao Battery at Humen (by Wong Chung Fai)



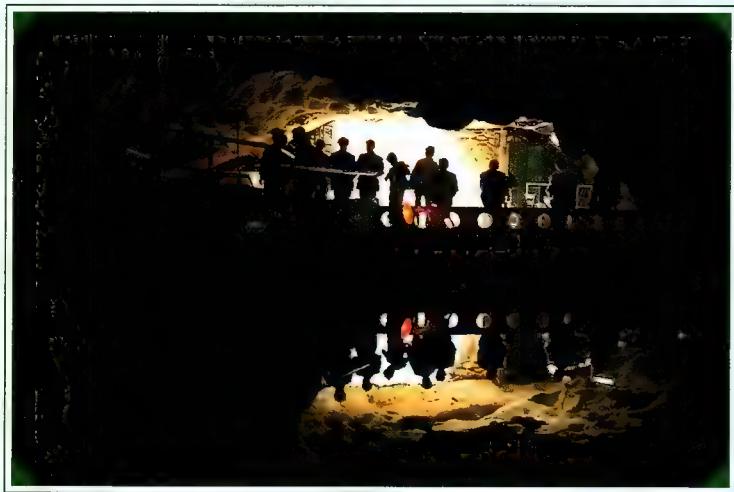
Honey Lake Country Club, Shenzhen (by Dong Fangming)



'China in Miniature' at Shenzhen (by Tai Chi Yin)

counts more than ten peaks and lush, beautiful scenery. Its thick vegetation harbours more than 1,700 plant species such as sagocas, ilex, tree fern (*Cyathea spinulosa*), etc. and it has been officially admitted to the World Nature Protection Association and is also one of UNESCO's ecology research centres.

The day I was there it was pouring with rain. Brooks were everywhere, forming little ponds and pools here and there. Unlike the Seven Star Crags, where water and hills are clearly demarcated, at Mount Dinghu the divisions



become blurred, forming a unified whole. Approaching Feishui (Flying Water) Pool, I caught sight of a waterfall which seemed to fall from the sky. The rain made it all the more powerful. I climbed higher and looked down, fascinated by the colourful raincoats worn by visitors gathered there to watch the play of the water. The bright colours dispelled the wild and sombre feel of the mountain on what was truly a gloomy day.

This is also the site of the Qingyun Monastery, said to be one of the four famous Buddhist monasteries of southern China. It was built in 1633 towards the end of the Ming dynasty.

By the time I reached the foot of the mountain, the rain had slackened off and stopped. The little stalls along the paths opened again for business. I bought a few packs of *tiankuai*, a dried herb used to make a traditional infusion.

Zhaoqing, with its comfortable hotels dotted around the lake, is easy to reach from Guangzhou, Shenzhen and Hong Kong. It is about three hours by bus from Guangzhou. But the most convenient way to get there is undoubtedly by ferry along the Xijiang. There is a daily service to and from Guangzhou and a direct ferry to Hong Kong on alternate days.

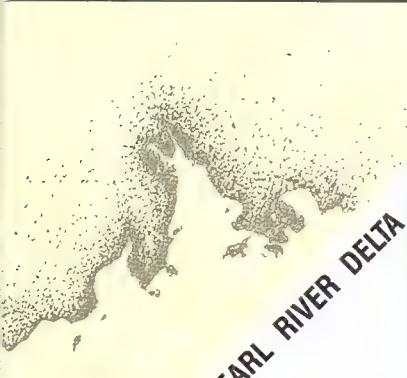
Translated by Wang Mingjie

The Seven Star Crags offer both panoramic views (4) and eerie cave interiors (3). Small shop (2) at Mount Dinghu, a place of pools and waterfalls (1).

3



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Changing Face of the Delta

TEXT BY JUN FENG

The Pearl River Delta is formed by the confluence of the Xijiang (West River), Beijiang (North River) and Dongjiang (East River) with the Zhujiang (Pearl River) downstream of Guangzhou, capital of Guangdong Province. The name comes from the pearl-bearing oysters once found in the river bisecting the city.

The Xijiang, which has the distinction of being the longest river in southern China, although it is the most important tributary also follows a parallel course of its own, emerging into the South China Sea west of Macau. This area between the Xijiang and the Pearl River estuary forms the delta proper, a complex network of interlinking channels. Formed by alluvial deposits, the fertile delta has long been famous for its rice, fish, sugar-cane and fruit, particularly lychees.

In recent years, the 'open' economic policy has provided favourable conditions for the cities and townships in the delta to establish broader links with the outside world. Like many Chinese coastal cities, this area enjoys priority in economic development but has an added edge because of its proximity to Hong Kong and Macau. The interesting combination of old and new it presents today is an indication of the rapid changes which have taken place within a few short years.





In the past, most settlements in the Pearl River Delta were separated by water, and it was necessary to take a boat to get almost anywhere. Last to retain this traditional isolation was the small town of Machong. The recent completion of three bridges was a cause for great celebration. Many of the smallest children had never seen a car, and certainly no motor vehicle had ever before driven through the streets of the town. These two, honoured with a special ride, seem unsure whether to laugh or cry.

(Photo by Peng Zhenge)

In Shenzhen's special economic zone, located just north of Hong Kong, skyscrapers are getting higher all the time. A 44-storey colossus, the Shenzhen Development Centre is so far the tallest building on the mainland. Its glass-clad walls reflect the city's insistent thrust towards the sky.

(Photo by Tai Chi Yin)

Fashion shows are popular entertainment for the youth of Guangzhou nowadays. They admire the models and try to copy the styles to keep up with changing fashions. For these Yao girls, members of a minority people living a still traditional life in the mountains of northern Guangdong, their first exposure to this aspect of modern living must come as a shock.

(Photo by Lam Kin Fai)





Naked bodies — even of plaster-moulded dummies for shop windows — are still unacceptable to the traditional-minded in most parts of China. But time has wrought many changes. In this Zhongshan factory, workers are not conscious of handling a 'body', they just concentrate — like workers anywhere — on turning out a good product to improve their company's reputation and sales.

(Photo by Peng Zhenge)

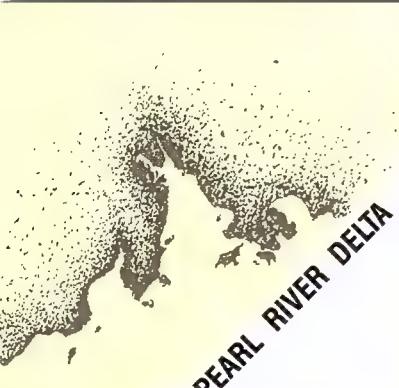




Compared to other cultural activities, modern dance has been fairly slow to reach China. Last year, the United States and China cooperated in a special dance programme. A visiting American choreographer arranged for Chinese dance students to perform in the historic Zhenhai Tower (now the Guangzhou Museum) in Guangzhou's Yuexiu Park. The result was a real eye-opener for his Chinese counterparts! 

(Photo by Peng Zhenge)

Translated by Tai Chi Yin



A Weekend in Zhuhai and Zhongshan

PHOTOS & ARTICLE BY LAM KIN FAI

So, where were we going to go over the fast-approaching long weekend? This thorny question pre-occupied me and my friends for quite some time. Three days were hardly enough to do very much or go very far (from Hong Kong), and we didn't particularly feel like anything too taxing anyway — whether physically or mentally. So where should we go? We finally decided on Zhuhai and Zhongshan in southern Guangdong on the western shore of the Pearl River Delta. These places are easy to reach via Macau, but there is also a direct jet-propelled catamaran service from Hong Kong, which takes about one hour to cross the estuary.

Zhuhai incorporates one of China's special economic zones, set up in August 1980, and is thus currently undergoing intensive development, with massive construction and road-building projects in progress and factories springing up everywhere. The overall population is around half a million. But it is also beautifully situated along Xianglu Bay, with subtropical foliage in its parks, islands and resort areas, and thus makes a convenient holiday playground for Hong Kong and Macau residents. Further out in the rural areas, off the beaten track, there are still old villages surrounded by farmlands. Close to the Macau border, at Gongbei, there is a





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continual coming and going. Macau housewives come on day trips to shop in Zhuhai's free markets, while Zhuhai farmers prepare loads of fresh cut flowers and vegetables for Macau's markets.

After checking in at the Zhuhai Holiday Resort, we first went to the Zhuhai International Golf Club at Tangjiawan, one of two excellently designed eighteen-hole golf courses built

Zhuhai offers high-quality golfing facilities (1), the stylish sauna and pool of the Zhuhai Holiday Resort (2, by Peng Zhenge) and shopping at Jiuzhou City' (3, 4).

to international championship standards (the other being the Zhongshan Golf Club near the Hot Springs Resort). Laid out in a long valley near the sea over 6,380 square metres, it attracts many foreign businessmen visiting the special economic zone.

Supper over, someone suggested a visit to the hotel sauna. It seemed a good idea, so in we trooped. The wood cabin filled with steam as the temperature rose. I was soon covered with sweat and had to smother my face in a wet towel to help me breathe. After ten minutes, I had had enough; I fled to the pool outside to cool off. But, however fierce, the sauna had cleansed

me thoroughly from head to foot and relaxed me. I certainly slept well that night.

The port of Zhuhai is called Jiuzhou. But Zhuhai also has another place of this name, 'Jiuzhou City', which is actually a mammoth shopping centre. A pair of bronze lions modelled on those at Beijing's Forbidden City guard the entrance. The majestic gateway, the bas-reliefs on the walls, all in a traditional Chinese style, give it a grand look.

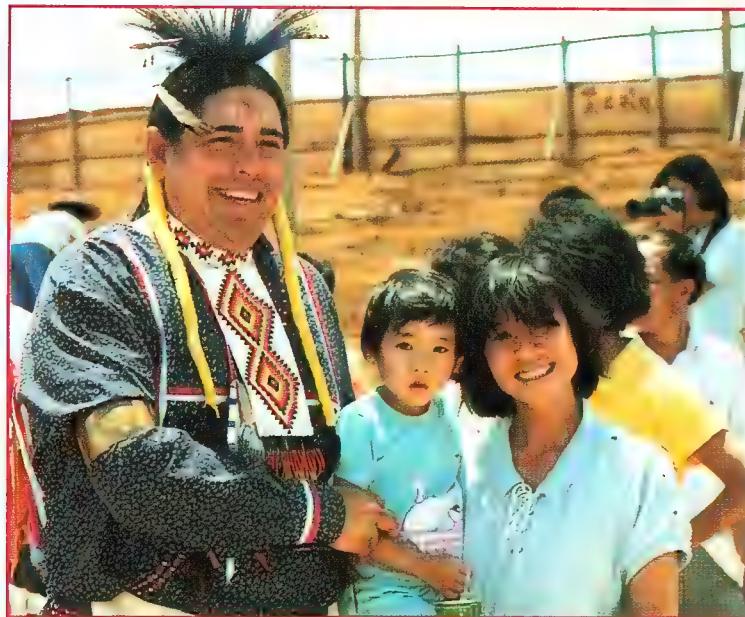
But the scene inside is rather different. In a garden layout interspersed with rivulets and little bridges there are streets lined with supermarkets and shops selling all sorts of things:

electrical appliances, fashion clothing, toys, etc. from the four corners of the world. The centre attracts many locals and Chinese from other provinces.

Most interesting to a visitor from abroad, however, are the arts and crafts. I fell in love with a porcelain bowl the sides of which were so thin they were practically transparent. But this would have been a pricy — if priceless — souvenir!

The Zhenzhu (Pearl) Amusement Park is said to be the largest in area in Southeast Asia. It has more than twenty separate amusements, and the entrance tickets are not expensive. The park is so large it takes three hours just to walk round it.





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The tickets can be used for several different amusements. After having a go on the Pirate Boat, the bumper cars (Dodgems) and the rollercoaster, I decided to do something more peaceful for a change and ventured into the Hall of Mirrors, a maze of glass and mirrors. I thought that as long as I groped my way along the mirrors I could not get lost, but I quickly found myself in a blind alley. I

could clearly see an exit in front but, when I got there, I found my way barred by a large sheet of glass.

When I finally managed to escape, I encountered some friends who had just emerged from the Thriller House. This, they told me, was modelled on the one at Tokyo's Disneyland.

From time to time, the park invites troupes from abroad to perform there; an American

Among the attractions of the Zhenzhu Amusement Park are the Hall of Mirrors (1) and the Thriller House (4). Performers from abroad have included an American circus (2, by Peng Zhenge). Outside the Fuhua Hotel in Zhongshan (3).

circus was a recent visitor. The general theme being the American Wild West, Zhuhai was full of cowboys and cowgirls for a while. The circus even brought along some highly-trained horses and six tall Indians.

We decided to move on to Shiqi, now usually known as Zhongshan, for a change of scene. There are plenty of minibuses plying the road between the two places and they halt on request.

First stop in Zhongshan was the Fuhua Hotel, a tall, modern hotel topped with a revolving restaurant, quite different in atmosphere from the garden-like Zhuhai Holiday Resort.

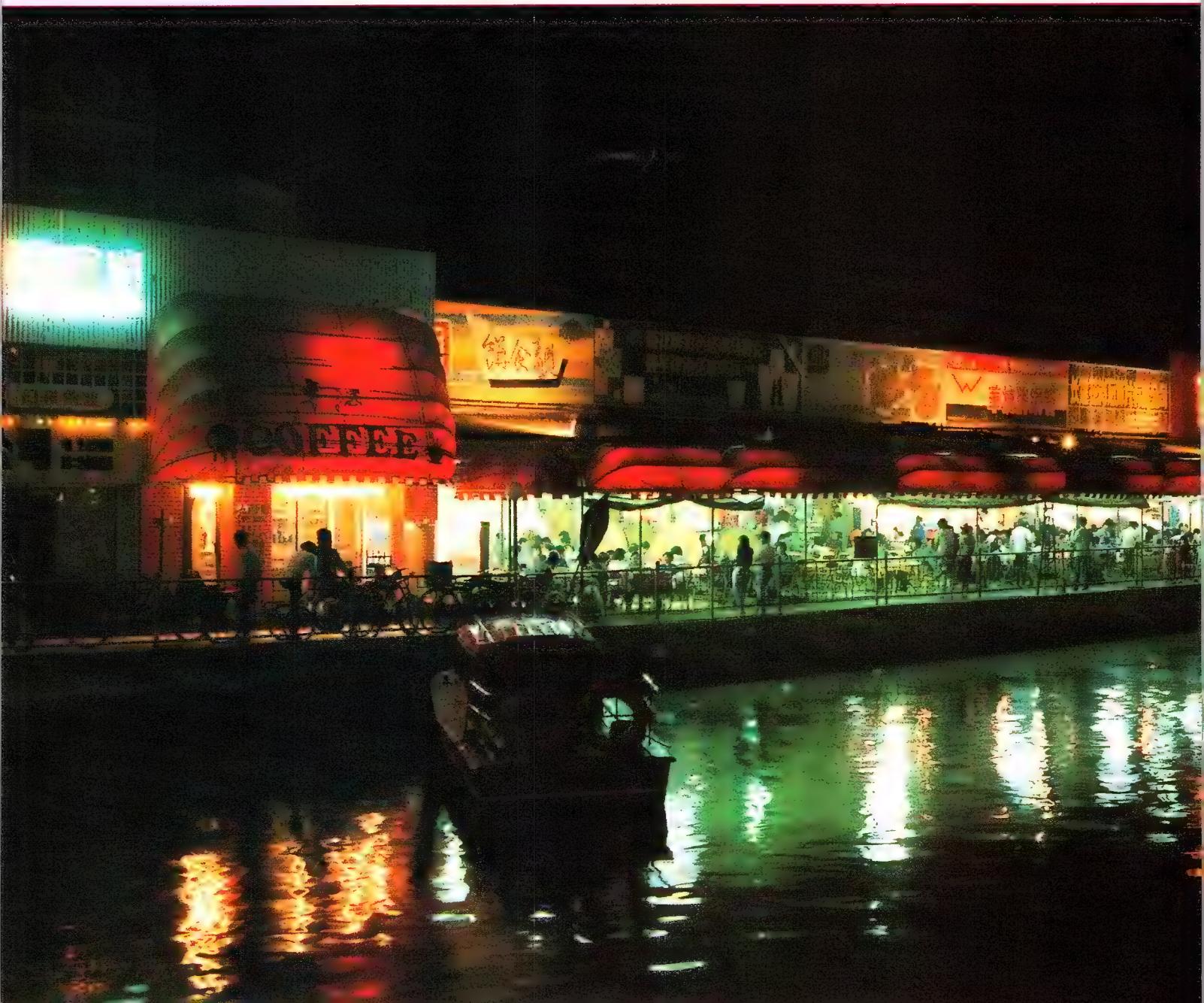
The previous year the hotel had seen some excitement when Hawaii's Narcissus Queen and some of her princesses descended on Zhongshan. One of them actually had her ancestral home in the place, so her glamorous return caused quite a stir. This area has seen many of its sons and daughters leave and return over the years, the most illustrious being Dr Sun Yat-sen (1866-1925), father of the 1911 Revolution, who was born in Cuiheng twenty-nine kilometres southeast of Zhongshan where his former home is now a museum.

As dusk fell and lamps were lit, my stomach started to rumble. My friends and I went

out looking for something special to eat, since Zhongshan has a fine culinary reputation.

On the opposite side of the River Qijiang we spotted a plaque bearing four characters: *Qi Jiang Shi Jie* (Qijiang Food Street). The riverside esplanade was about one hundred metres long and all along it were small restaurants, snackbars and food stalls — about twenty in all. We crossed the footbridge and chose a restaurant.

The prices on the menu seemed reasonable, but the menu was enormous! It was difficult to come to a decision faced with such a choice. Apart from chicken, duck and goose, there was pigeon; in addition to



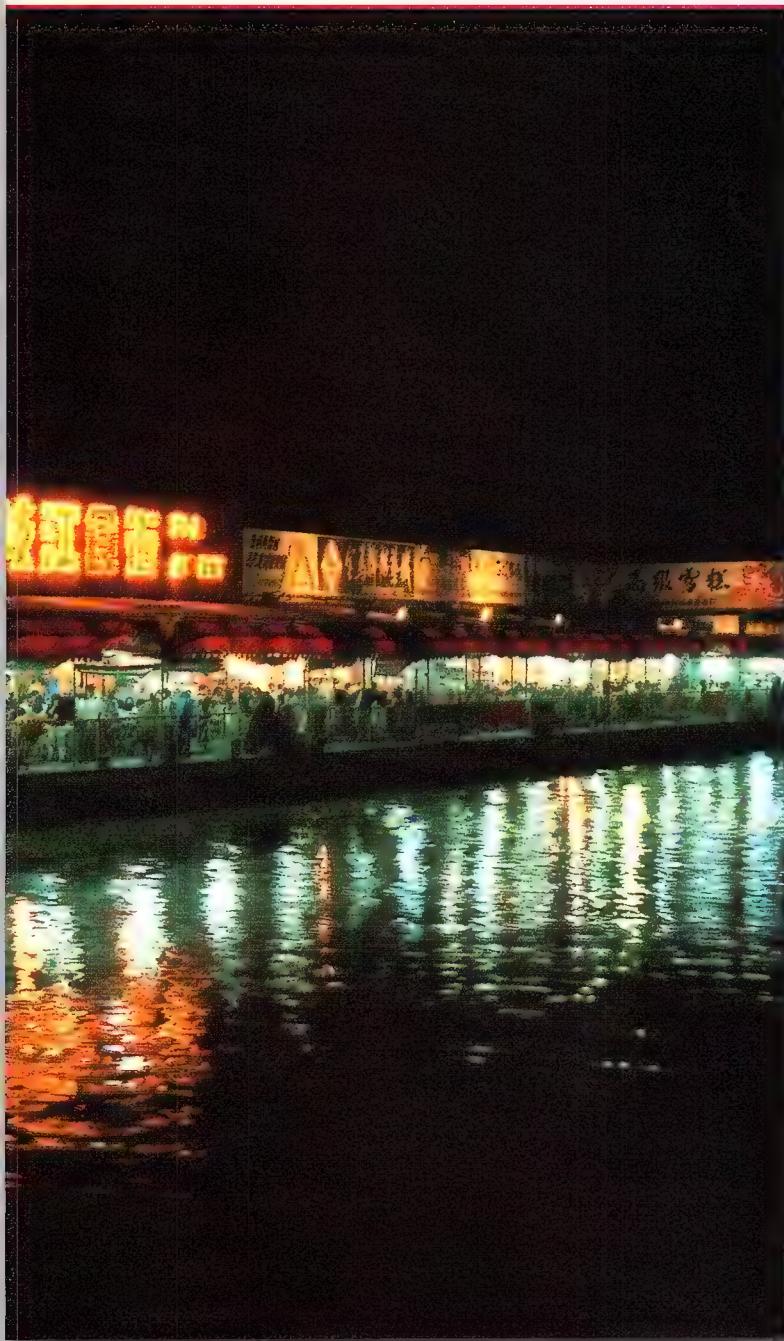
mutton, beef and pork, there was dogmeat; besides, there were prawns, shrimps, crabs, fish of all kinds, turtle, etc. Not to mention all the different ways in which dishes could be prepared. After some minutes of enjoyable discussion, we decided on seafood — Zhongshan grass carp, fresh prawns — and the famous local roast pigeon.

Qijiang Food Street sells more than food — this is in fact Zhongshan's liveliest night market. I was just thinking about buying some local produce to take home — such as the salted pork which tastes rather like Chinese sausage — when there came an explosion and the pungent smell of gun-

powder. Someone was letting off firecrackers or fireworks. As this is frowned on in Hong Kong, we too rushed to join in the fun, which made a fittingly exuberant finish to our brief holiday. 

Translated by Wang Mingjie

Cantonese songs (3) add to the atmosphere of Zhongshan's Qijiang Food Street (1); one local speciality is salted pork (4) (3 and 4 by Chan Yat Nin). The Narcissus Queen and her entourage perform Hawaiian dances (2, by Peng Zheng), and many a foreign visitor's stay goes with a bang (5).



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Jianghan Hotel

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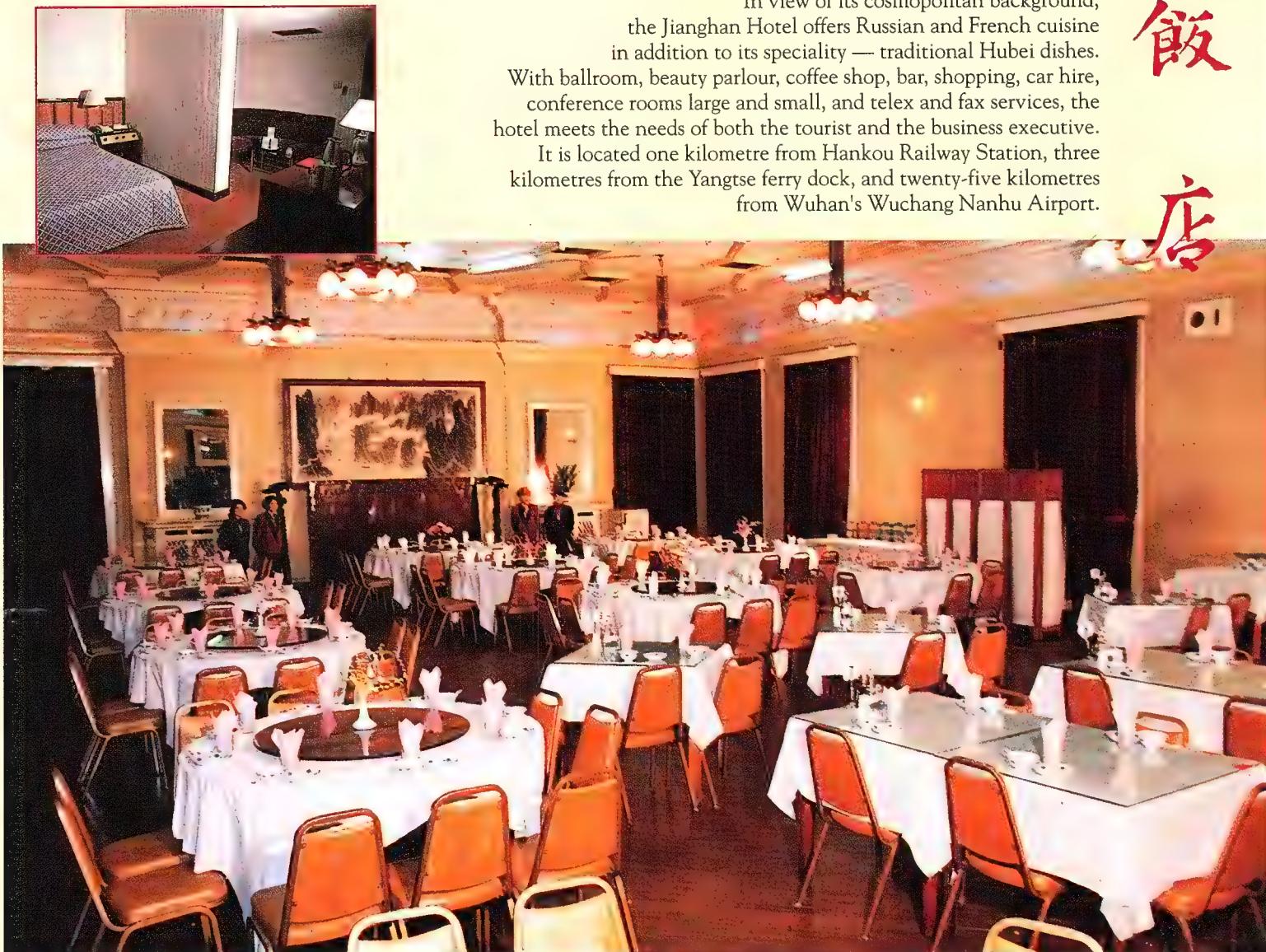
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Built by a French architect in 1914, this elegant building in French style has welcomed many heads of state and top government officials from all over the world.

In addition to its 100 guestrooms and 76 standard suites, it boasts 22 deluxe suites and two presidential suites. Facilities include air-conditioning, closed-circuit TV and stereo HiFi.

In view of its cosmopolitan background, the Jianghan Hotel offers Russian and French cuisine in addition to its speciality — traditional Hubei dishes. With ballroom, beauty parlour, coffee shop, bar, shopping, car hire, conference rooms large and small, and telex and fax services, the hotel meets the needs of both the tourist and the business executive.

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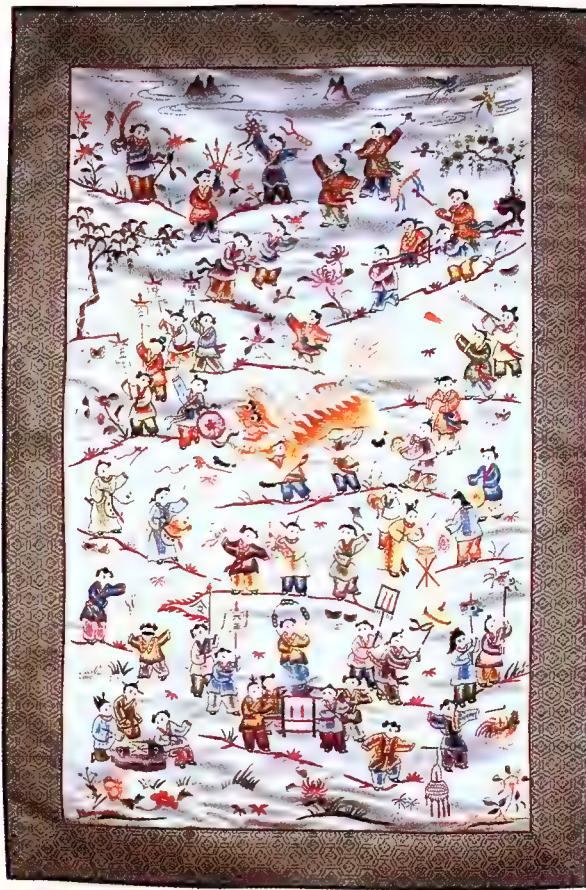
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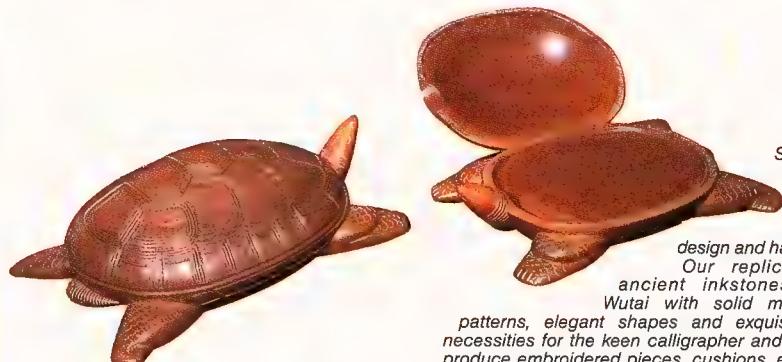
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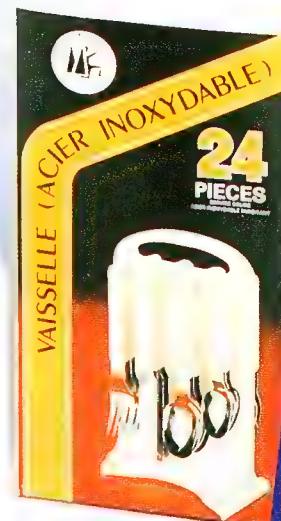
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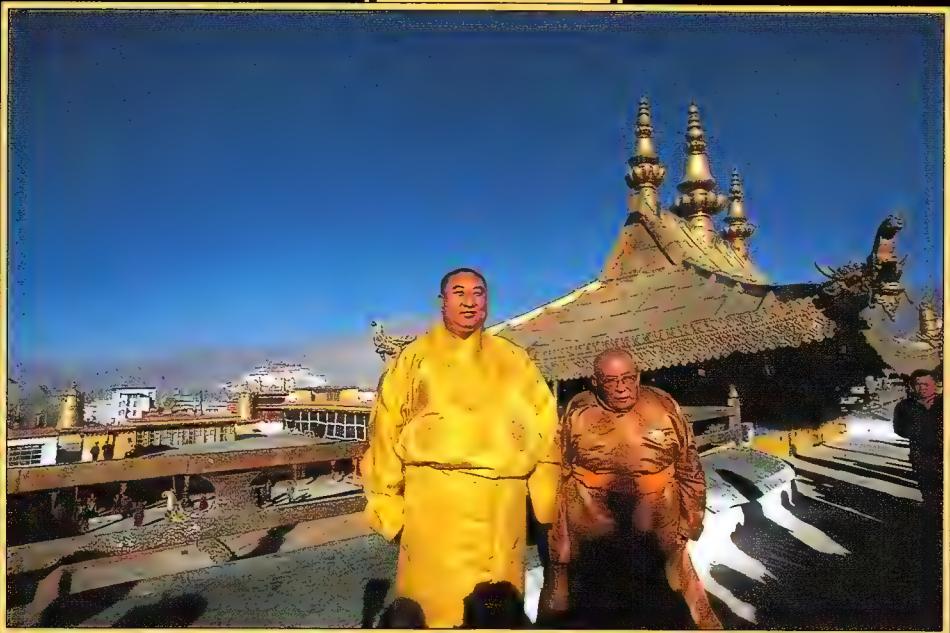
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The Panchen Lama's Last Days

ARTICLE BY HU SISHENG





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EDITOR'S NOTE:

The Great Stupa at Tashilhunpo Monastery in Xigazê, Tibet, which had been under construction for four years, was finally completed on 10 December 1988. On 15 January 1989 the Panchen Lama, Qoigyi Gyaincain, arrived from Beijing to officiate at the rites of consecration for this highly symbolic monument of Tibetan Buddhism. However, possibly as a result of the demands made on him by the lengthy ceremonies, the Tibetan religious leader died unexpectedly of a heart attack shortly afterwards. Although he was rushed to hospital for emergency treatment, resuscitation measures proved unsuccessful, and he passed away on 28 January. He was fifty-one.

Hu Sisheng, the writer of this article, was present at the ceremony in Xigazê and witnessed what were to be the last few days of the tenth Panchen Lama.

Set at the foot of Dromari (Tara's Mountain) in the western part of Xigazê, Tibet's second city located 355 kilometres west of Lhasa, Tashilhunpo is one of the four great monasteries of Tibet and one of the six major religious centres of the Gelugpa or Yellow Sect. This has been the official seat of successive Panchen Lamas.

It was founded in 1447 by the nephew and youngest disciple of Tsong Khapa (1357-1419), founder of the Yellow Sect, at a time when Xigazê was still largely dominated by the Kadampa or Red Sect. Under Lozang Chhoegyad, the fourth Panchen Lama (1570-1662), the monastery de-

gold were used; it is located in the Great Hall of the Maitreya built in 1914 by Pachen the Ninth especially to house it. The statue, moulded on a wooden frame, represents Maitreya (the Buddha of the Future), revered in Tibet as Jampa, sitting on a lotus throne in the *vitarka-mudra*, the gesture which represents reflection.

The monastery also boasts a *thangka* wall nine storeys high on which a colossal *thangka* (a religious scroll painting on silk or cloth) is unfurled and displayed on just three days each year at a special summer festival. Apart from countless chanting and prayer halls, galleries and courtyards, another attraction is the funerary stupa of Pachen the Fourth in what was formerly the Pachen Lama's palace.

Yet another hall of Tashilhunpo once housed five golden stupas containing the mortal remains



of the fifth to ninth Panchen Lamas. These were, in order, Pachen the Fifth, Lozang Yeshe (1663-1737), Pachen the Sixth, Paldan Yeshe (1738-1780), Pachen the Seventh, Tanpi Nyima (1782-1853), Pachen the Eighth, Tanpi Wangchhug (1855-1882) and Pachen the Ninth, Chhoekyi Nyima (1883-1937). According to the rituals of the Yellow Sect, only Living Buddhas are accorded the honour of burial in a stupa, while stupas encrusted with gold leaf are reserved exclusively for the Panchen Lama and the Dalai Lama, reincarnations of Amitabha (Buddha of Infinite Light) and Chenrezi or Avalokitesvara (Bodhisattva of Compassion), respectively.

Why the Great Stupa?

During the chaotic years of the 'cultural revolution', these five golden stupas were destroyed, and the sacred ashes and remains they contained dragged out and thrown into the wasteland or ponds.

Fortunately, some local devotees secretly managed to collect and hide some of the scattered remains. In the summer of 1982, when the

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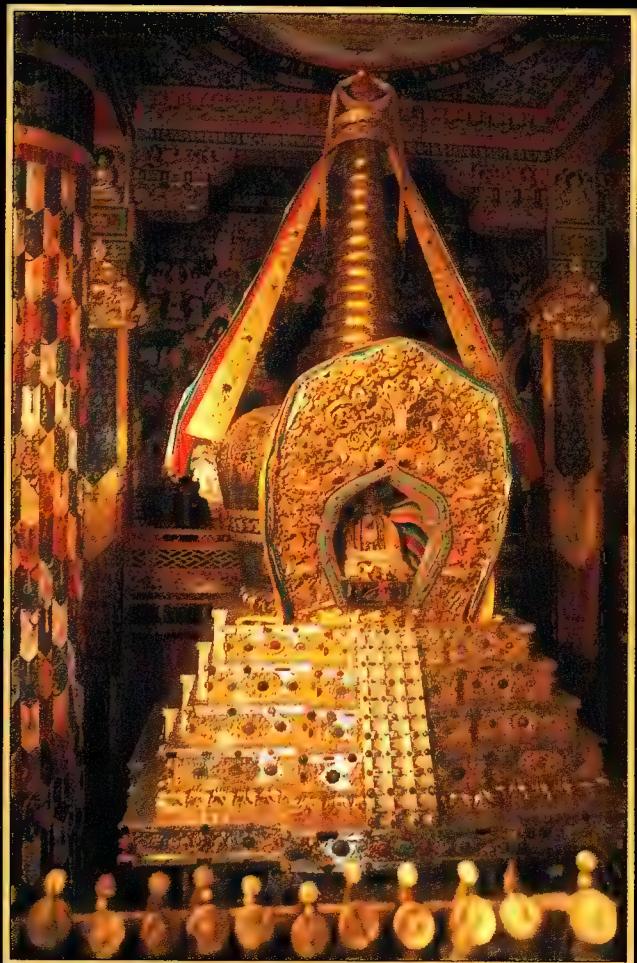
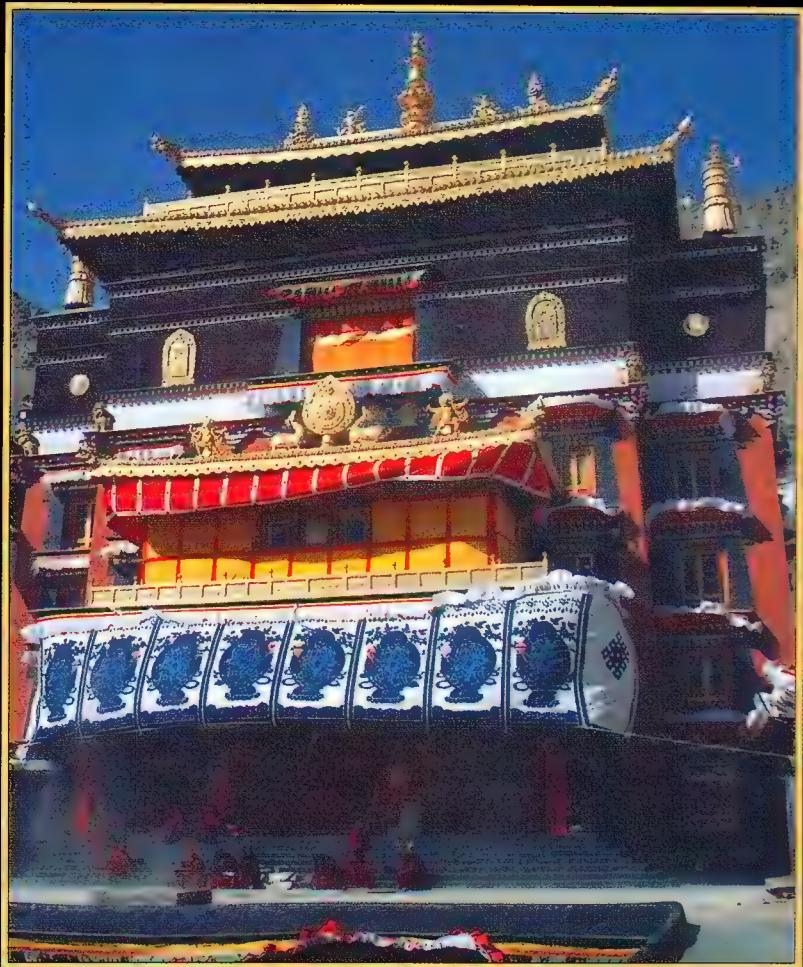
After visiting the Jokhang Temple in Lhasa (2), the Panchen Lama proceeded to Tashilhunpo Monastery in Xigazê (1) (both by Cheng Weidong).

The Great Stupa (3), in which the sandalwood funerary boxes are deposited (5), also contains statues of the fifth to ninth Panchen Lamas (1). Final preparations for the grand ceremony (2, by Che Gang). Golden stupas are the prerogative of the Panchen and Dalai Lamas (4) (all photos except 2 by Lü Xiangyou).



veloped into the political as well as religious power base of Back Tibet, as it was called. Xigazê was the capital of Tsang (west central Tibet) and thus in a state of constant rivalry with Lhasa, the capital of U (east central Tibet), up until the seventeenth century. Tashilhunpo once had 4,000 monks and lamas and boasted four tantric colleges, each of which had its own abbot. These four abbots had the onerous task of leading the search for each reincarnation of the Panchen Lama.

The cultural relics and historic monuments preserved within a radius of 1.5 kilometres around have made Tashilhunpo the major sacred site of the Yellow Sect after Lhasa. Among its marvels is a gold-plated bronze Buddha 22.4 metres tall, the world's largest, for the making of which over 115 tons of red copper and around 280 kilos of



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Panchen Lama returned to Xigazé for the first time in eighteen years, these faithful followers presented him with the relics and told him: 'As you are the latest reincarnation of the Panchen Lama, it is up to you to reconstruct the stupas and their hall as soon as possible.'

Moved by their piety and fully aware of his responsibilities, the Panchen Lama proposed and helped design a majestic hall with a single stupa to act as a sort of joint memorial to his predecessors. The new structure was named Zhashinanjie, meaning 'blessing and victory', referred to for short in English as the Great Stupa.

The Great Stupa is thirty-three metres high and covers 1,933 square metres. It encloses a golden stupa which stands eleven metres high. In creating the impressive appearance of this stupa and its hall, craftsmen used nearly 110 kilos of gold, one thousand kilos of silver, 665 kilos of mercury, over five tons of copper, over a thousand tons of timber and 70,000 blocks of stone. The whole project took about four years and was finally completed on 10 December 1988.

At ten o'clock on the morning of 15 January 1989, the Panchen Lama, who had flown from Beijing (where he lived) to Lhasa and thence driven in a sort of triumphal motorcade to Xigazé, set off to Tashilhunpo Monastery from his temporary residence, the Dêqên Pozhang Palace. He paid his last respects to the mortal remains of his predecessors as a preliminary step in the solemn consecration of the Great Stupa.

That evening, together with his 76-year-old canon teacher — the Living Buddha Jiamuya — and several other venerable lamas, the Panchen Lama carefully wrapped the remains in lengths of yellow silk, placing each in its own individual box



glowed with their light. The stupa was encircled by fruit and cakes offered by the faithful. Some nine hundred monks and lamas assembled; among them were members of the esoteric tantric colleges as well as representatives of the Yellow Sect from the four corners of Tibet and beyond.

At ten o'clock exactly, to the solemn tones of the Buddhist horns, the Panchen Lama mounted his throne. To the accompaniment of trumpets and bells, prayers for the peace and eternal rest of his predecessors' souls echoed through the hall as he invoked Buddha's blessing.

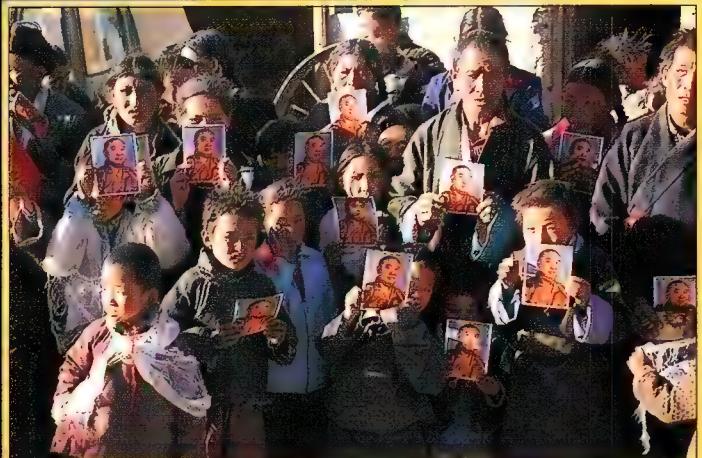
According to Tibetan Buddhist custom, these rites had to continue non-stop for three days and nights, so they ended only on 21 January.

Ceremonial Climax

The very next day, 22 January, brought the grand consecration ceremony. Any Buddhist statue or stupa must be consecrated on completion, calling upon the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas in the vicinity to invest it with their wisdom and merit so that it may receive the prayers of both the monastic community and the laity.

On this day, the golden roof of the Great Stupa sparkled in the sun. The main doors, painted red and gold, were shut firmly and knotted cloth banners barred the entrance. A row of seven auspicious animals in silver guarded the threshold.

Every room in the monastery was piled high with offerings from the faithful: flour, mutton, beef,



of sandalwood. Each of the boxes, which bore an engraved likeness of the appropriate Panchen Lama in a sitting position, was then filled with saffron and other sweet-smelling substances.

Great Stupa Receives Sacred Relics

The date fixed for placing the remains in the Great Stupa was 17 January. At two o'clock in the afternoon the Panchen Lama led a procession of elderly lamas to collect the sandalwood boxes and take them to the Great Stupa.

The boxes were set down on the second level of the golden stupa. After the Panchen Lama had draped them with gold and white *hata* (silk scarves used by Tibetans in greeting and to show respect), they were placed inside it.

On 19 January, a thousand butter lamps were lit on the altar in the Great Stupa so that the hall

As Tibet's second highest religious leader, the Panchen Lama is greatly revered (1); the Dêqên Pozhang Palace (3). Offerings piled high (2) (all by Chen Weidong), and monks from tantric colleges at the ceremony (4, by Lü Xiangyou).



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tea, deep-fried food, dried fruit, sweets, and more. There were so many gifts that a five-storeyed stand like an altar was set up especially to receive them in one of the courtyards.

At half past twelve, the Living Buddha Qiaza Qiangbaichilie announced the start of the ceremony. The Panchen Lama addressed the crowd (this was in fact the last time he spoke in public). Among other things he said: 'The essence of Buddhist doctrine is to renounce evil and to embrace good; in this way we can purify our souls and dignify our land, spreading happiness among all living beings and creating virtue and beneficence. In reconstructing the funerary stupa of the Panchen Lamas, we wish to develop the spirit of these leaders, who never stopped examining their conscience and working towards perfection. We also want to follow their example



in protecting and propagating Buddhist doctrine and in fighting for the prosperity of the country....'

At three o'clock in the afternoon the consecration ceremony reached its climax. As ancient liturgical music resounded on the horns, the Panchen Lama and those present approached the main entrance to the Great Stupa. Having recited aloud some passages from the Sutra of Blessing, he untied the knots and pushed the doors wide open.

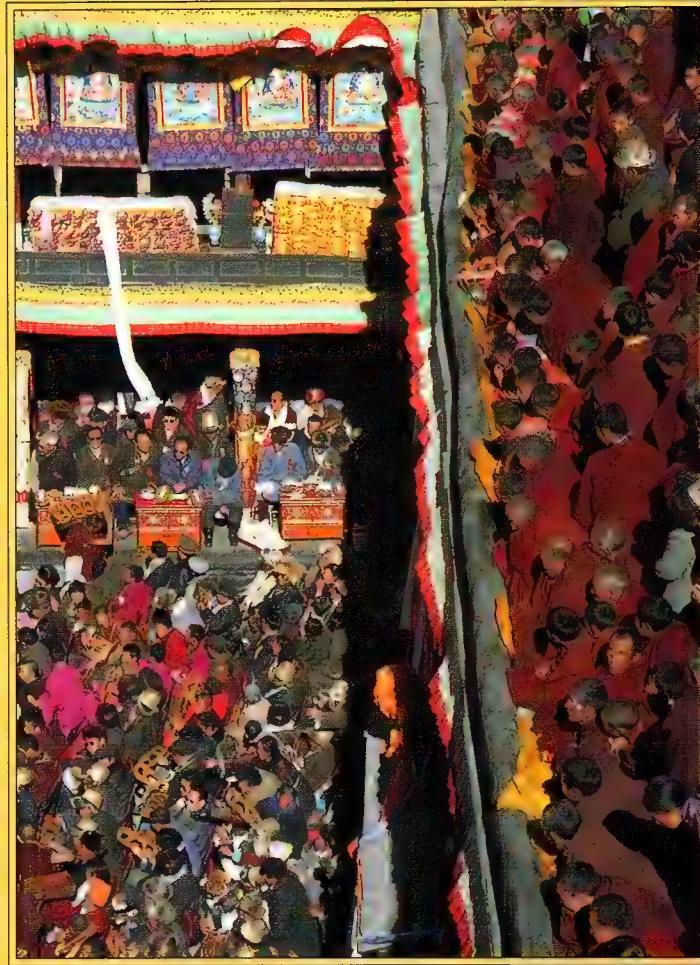
There was a wild burst of music on the instant and general jubilation descended on the monastery. Circles formed to dance to the rhythm of drums, Tibetan dramas were enacted, and there was much mutual congratulation. The courtyards echoed with cries of *lajieluo* (a Tibetan blessing for happiness and eternal prosperity).

Magnificent Murals

Surrounded by a crowd of followers, the Panchen Lama walked with measured steps into the Great Stupa. There he lit butter lamps before offering *hata* before the altar on which were placed statues of his five predecessors.

In the light of the lamps, one could see that the hall was lined with murals. In the centre at the back were portraits of Sakyamuni, the historical Buddha, and Tsong Khapa. The side walls bore representations of other historical leaders of Tibetan Buddhism. But the most striking murals were the portraits of the ninth and tenth Panchen Lamas. Modern painting techniques had been used to render them with stunning realism.

Apart from officiating at all these different rites, the Panchen Lama also received and dispensed blessings to tens of thousands of pilgrims, and



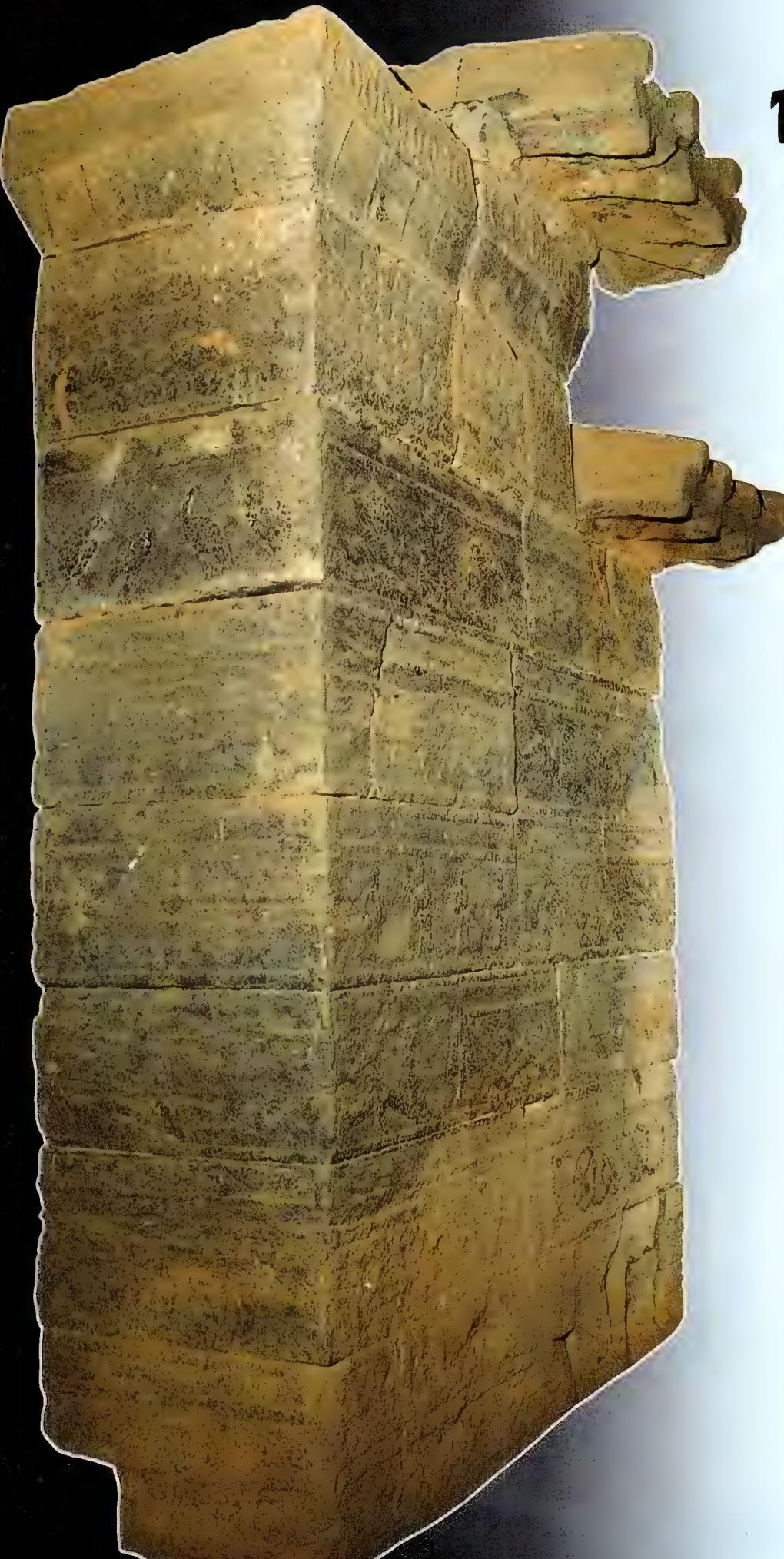
held forums and discussions with local government and religious leaders. It was possibly as a result of over-exertion that, only six days later (28 January 1989), he passed away after suffering a heart attack while in his residence in Xigazé.

Who could have foreseen that, as this important consecration ceremony drew to its close, so too did the life of Qoigyi Gyaincain, Panchen the Tenth? 

Translated by W. Lau

This splendidly attired Tibetan woman from Back Tibet (1) was among pilgrims eagerly awaiting the big moment (2, by Lü Xiangyou). Monks gather for the Panchen Lama's blessing (3); modern-style mural of the tenth Panchen Lama in the Great Stupa (4) (1, 3 and 4 by Cheng Weidong).





Three *Que* of the

PHOTOS & ARTICLE BY WEI DEZHONG

The seventy peaks of the Songshan Range (site of the Shaolin Monastery of *kungfu* fame) rise to 1,500 metres in the north of Dengfeng County in Henan Province and are divided into two by the River Shaolin. The mountain to the east is called Taishi, that to the west Shaoshi. The three Han-dynasty symbolic structures or *que* found in these mountains are really three pairs of stone pillars. In ancient China, *que* marked the location of the main entrance to a watch-tower, palace, temple, monastery, mausoleum, or other major building. Two pillars formed a single unit, although there was no actual barrier or door stretching between them.

The three *que* are called Taishi, Shaoshi and Qimu. The Taishi *que* was erected south of Zhongyue Temple, a famous Taoist sanctuary of central China, while the other two pairs stand in front of the ruins of Shaoyi Temple and Qimu Temple, respectively. They date from the Eastern Han dynasty (25-220) and are the oldest temple *que* so far found in China.

Associations with Emperor Yu

All three temples and their *que* are connected in legend with Emperor Yu of the Xia dynasty, often known as Yu the Great, who is said to have gained fame by bringing terrible floods under control in the twenty-third century B.C. Emperor Yu allegedly married two sisters of the Tushan family one after the other. The older sister lived in a cave on Mount Taishi, her younger sister in a cave on Mount Shaoshi. In fact, *taishi* and *shaoshi* simply mean 'first wife' and 'second wife'. The temples and pillars are said to have been built by later generations in their memory. The Taishi Temple (now the Zhongyue Temple) and Qimu Temple were both dedicated to the older Tushan sister, Shaoyi Temple to her younger sister, Yu's second wife.

Standing to east and west of the granite-paved Spirit Way leading to Zhongyue Temple, 6.75 metres apart, the Taishi *que* consist of rectangular blocks of granite engraved with seal characters, uncanny figures, animals, birds, trees and donors making offerings to spirits. Notwithstanding the great diversity and beauty of the designs, what

Songshan Range

attracts one's attention most is the curious fact that architectural details on the stone pillars imitate the structures of wooden architecture. I noted a main ridge, perpendicular ridges, rows of tiles, eaves tiles and rafters, in addition to a five-ridge roof supported by four pillars sculpted from a single block of granite.

On Mount Shaoshi I could find only the ruins of Shaoyi Temple, but the pillars are still standing. Built by the governor Zhu Chong in 123 (the second year of the Yanguang reign of the Eastern Han), the Shaoshi *que* are very similar to those at the Zhongyue Temple and are almost square in shape. The granite surfaces are carved in bas-relief with hunting scenes, elephant-taming, acrobats in action, etc. They provide a glimpse into the leisure activities of Eastern Han aristocrats.

In one bas-relief we see two nobles on horseback chasing a deer which has been hit by an arrow. The deer seems to be in the throes of a death struggle, its long neck twisted back in agony. Another scene on the Shaoshi pillars shows a woman kicking a leather ball, her slim figure revealed as her long silk sleeves billow out above her head.

In all, the three *que* bear over two hundred engravings, although wind and weather have caused these to deteriorate over the past 1,800 years. In many cases, only the outline of the carving can still be identified. On the Shaoshi pillars, in the scene showing a tiger and a sheep's head, it is no longer possible to make out details of the sheep's face; only the tiger remains, with snarling mouth and ferocious pose. Curiously, the weathering has occasionally enhanced the effect: for instance, in the elephant-taming scene, the elephant seems all the wilder because of the rough texture of the damaged granite.

Yu and Qimu

In the same year — 123 — the Qimu Temple and its *que* were erected east of where the Songyang Academy (built in 484) now stands at the foot of Wansui Peak on Mount Taishi.

Relief carvings together with inscriptions in seal script grace the Qimu *que*. It is still possible to

The shape of the Shaoshi que, like the others, is based on elements of wooden architecture (1). The Qimu que is the most badly weathered (2).



discern thirty-one lines of characters which are regarded as China's oldest inscriptions in seal script. Experts have deciphered the characters. They sing the praises of Yu the Great and tell the story of Qimu, the older Tushan sister, who was the first wife of Yu and mother of the Xia-dynasty ruler Si Qi.

According to the legend, endless rain fell throughout China in the year 2297 B.C., resulting in great floods as the rivers overflowed their banks. Emperor Yao, the ruler of the time, ordered the headman of the Xia tribe, one Si Gun, to bring the floods under control. Si Gun, although known for his skill in water conservancy, mistakenly built dams and embankments in an attempt to block the rushing waters. He spent nine years on this project, but failed to find a solution. Emperor Yao was greatly enraged and ordered him to be executed, at the same time appointing his son, Si Wenming, to try again.



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Si Wenming examined the reasons for his father's failure and decided to resort to dredging, diverting the waters to low-lying areas. In this way, beginning in 2286 B.C., he succeeded in controlling the floods within the course of thirteen years, during which, so the records say, he passed by his own home three times without stopping to visit his family, so involved in his task was he. His success brought him great prestige and the name Yu the Great. Emperor Shun, Yao's successor, abdicated in favour of Yu, who then founded the Xia dynasty.

It is said that when Yu first received orders to control the floods, he took his wife with him to the Songshan Range where he planned to dig a tunnel between Mounts Taishi and Shaoshi to let the waters escape. Although she was pregnant, Qimu stayed to help her husband on the mountain, taking him meals every day. Since it was difficult to dig the tunnel, Yu changed himself into a bear to be able to work more effectively. Not wanting his wife to see him like that, he told her: 'Wait until you hear the sound of my drum before you bring me my food'.

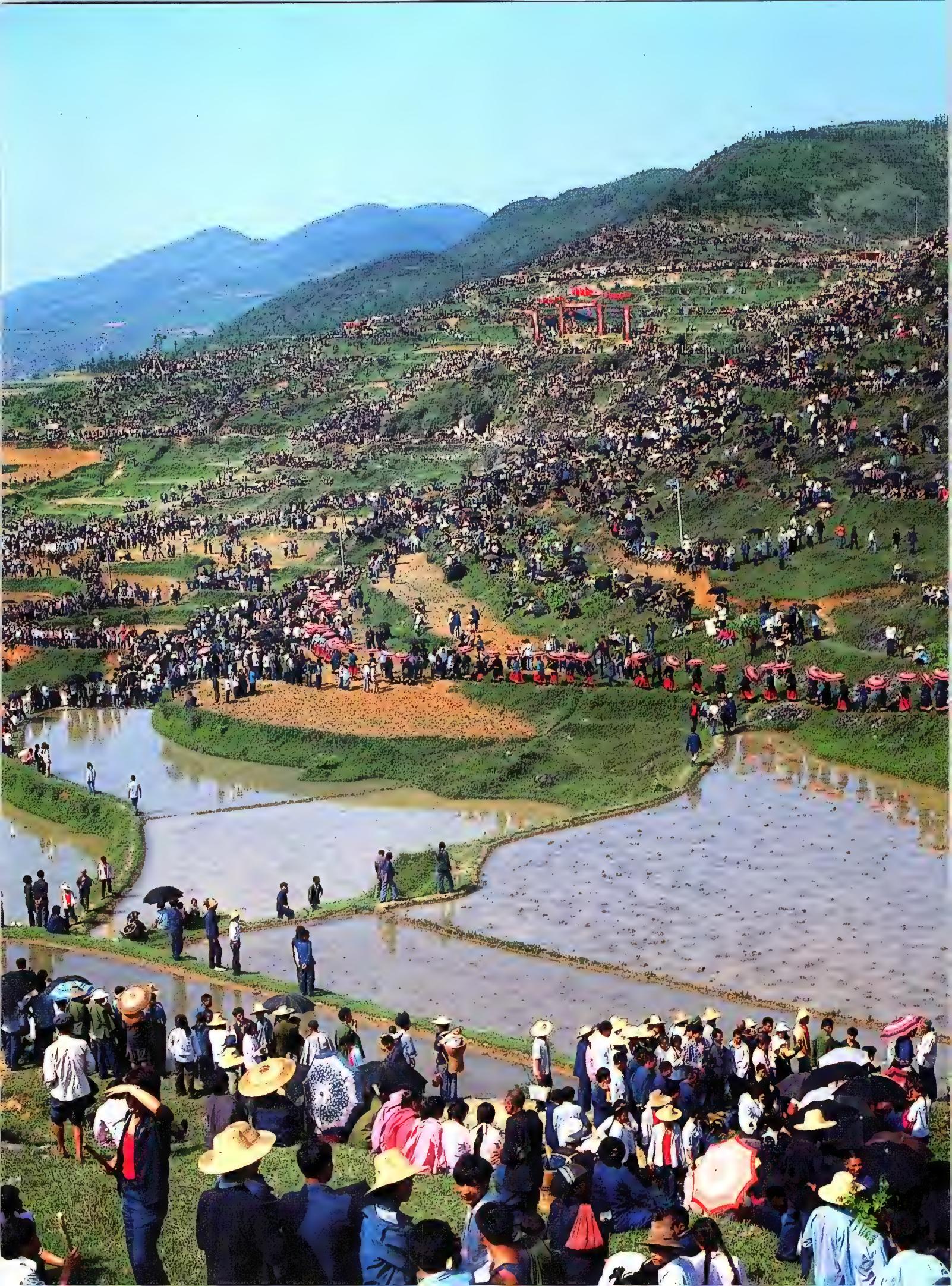


But one day, as Yu was working away in bear form, he inadvertently dropped a stone which hit the drum, although he himself was so engrossed he didn't hear it. His wife however did and hurried out with her husband's meal. Arriving at the tunnel entrance, she encountered a bear. Although she guessed it must be her husband, this was such a shock that she took to her heels. Yu followed her. On the point of being caught by the bear at the foot of Wansui Peak, Qimu transformed herself into a huge stone. When Yu arrived, all he found was this stone but, remembering that his wife was pregnant, he patted it, crying out: 'Give me my child!' A split appeared in the rock to the north of the stone and there Yu found an infant. He called his son Qi, meaning 'split', and when the boy grew up, he succeeded to his father's throne, becoming the second emperor of the Xia dynasty. Thus the legend!

Translated by He Fei



Taishi que bas-relief in shape of humanoid door-knocker (1). Shaoshi que carvings include a hunting scene (2), woman playing football (3), elephant-taming (5), and tiger with sheep's head (4). One fascinating scene on the Qimu que shows acrobats, including at least one woman, performing stunts on horseback (6).



The Siyueba Festival at Jiwei

ARTICLE BY WANG JIA

In a western Hunan village I wandered to and fro among a crowd of Miao people dressed in their most colourful best. The women were truly striking since they were covered with silver ornaments from head to foot, their most astonishing feature the heavy silver head-dress adorned with pendants and little bells. Whenever the women moved their heads, even slightly, the bells tinkled musically. However, on a festive day like today, with all the cacophony of trumpets, gongs, drums, firecrackers and voices raised in excitement, you could hardly hear these agreeable sounds unless you were standing right alongside.

The eighth day of the fourth lunar month — Siyueba — is an important festival for the Miao. Its origin is based on historical happenings. Many centuries ago, there were Miao people living by the River Longtang at the foot of the Fenghuang Mountains in western Hunan. No longer able to bear the oppression they suffered under the rule of the Qing dynasty (1644-1911), they rose in revolt under the leadership of two brothers, Yayi and Yanu. But, overwhelmed by the superior strength of the Qing army, they were soon defeated and Yayi was killed in battle. Yanu led the remnants of his forces into safety in Guizhou to the west of Hunan. But, tragically, he was killed in a battle in Guiyang on the eighth day of the fourth month of the following year. To commemorate their heroes, on that day every year the Miao people gather to hold a ceremony at which they sing, dance and perform traditional rites.

The Ladder of Knives

I was attending this festival in the village of Jiwei in Huayuan County in the Xiangxi Tujia and Miao Autonomous Prefecture. The open space where it was held was surrounded by terraced fields on three sides, forming a sort of arena. A nearby pond mirrored the Miao in their gala attire. The arena was packed solid. I was told that around 100,000 Miao had flocked here from bordering areas of Hunan and Guizhou.

A crowd had gathered around a wooden post into which several dozen knives had been wedged with their blades facing upwards. A young man was in process of climbing up the post using the knives as steps ... in his bare feet! Everyone watched with bated breath. The young man went up and down without a hitch, his hands and feet perfectly free from cuts.

I asked an elderly man beside me if this young man was perhaps a master of *qigong*. 'He's protected,' the old man said. 'He's protected by celestial soldiers and generals who have come at the invitation of a deity.'

Eight-People Swing

Not far away from the knife-studded post there was a swing with two wheels mounted on a central pivot, each taking four people, known as an 'eight-person swing'. It was fascinating to watch and I wanted nothing more than to have a go myself. But there was a long queue and I could not spare the time to wait. One thing still puzzles me to this day: most of the people in the queue were elderly men!

The air vibrated constantly with the sound of drums and gongs. Crowds of people were dancing to their rhythm. On one side there was a huge drum on a wooden rack and the drummer was dancing even as he beat it. There were various sorts of dances. Some people were dancing alone, some in pairs, others in groups. The Monkey Dance was something special. Men wearing mischievous-looking monkey masks imitated the movements of the Miao as they carry out their tasks at different seasons.

Ushering in the Dragon

A very important part of the ceremony was taking place by the pond. Its purpose was to 'usher in the dragon', one of the ancient Miao totems, in order to invoke the powerful dragon's help in getting a good harvest and to ensure general prosperity and good luck.

A line of almost a hundred women gradually unfolded a piece of pink cloth more than a hundred metres long. Wearing embroidered tunics and pleated skirts, with silver ornaments around their necks and holding colourful um-

Miao spectators flock to the terraces (1, by Lü Zhiguo) as shamans add a note of solemnity (2, by Jia Shuxin).



1



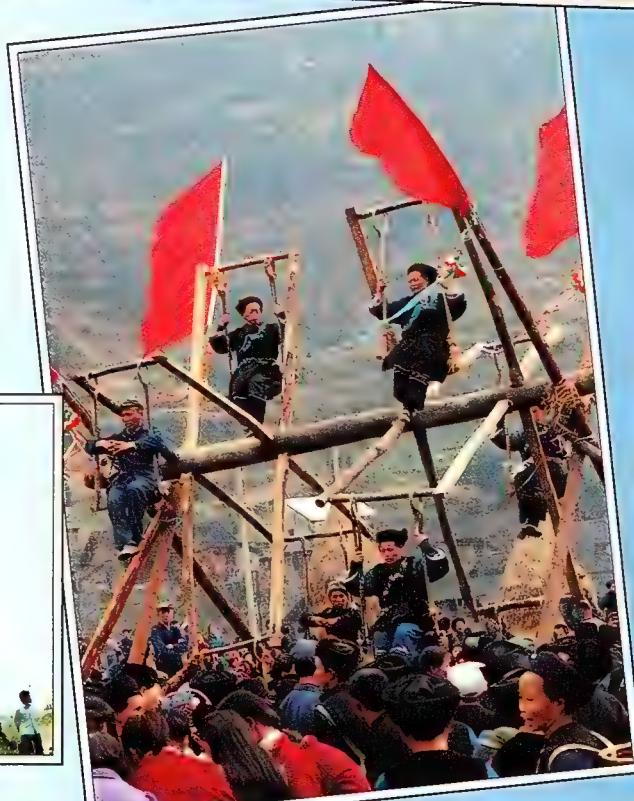
2



3



4



6



5

brellas over their heads, they moved slowly towards the bank. There they began to call on the dragon in unison. Instantly the drums and gongs resounded and firecrackers exploded wildly. Gently swaying their bodies to make the cloth shake, the women retreated in rhythm to show that they had ushered in the dragon.

The Buffalo Sacrifice

Meanwhile, another ritual was being prepared in another area of the arena — a traditional part of the ancient sacrificial ceremony to Yayi and Yanu. This was the climax of the festival.

In the centre of the arena stood a big buffalo tethered to a painted wooden post by a thick hemp rope attached to a bamboo ring. A shaman or priest in a red cape stepped up and checked everything carefully before uttering a prayer. Next, several young men armed with spears walked around the arena and began to thrust their spears at the buffalo. Every time it was hit, the buffalo ran wildly around the post, but of course could not escape. The men cried out whenever they met their target and the onlookers encouraged them with shouts. The spectacle was not considered over until the buffalo fell, dead.

Courtship Dance

By way of contrast, I was advised to go and watch the *dule* dance. This is in fact a sort of open-air dance party at which unmarried young people search for a likely spouse. They dance hand in hand and shoulder to shoulder in circles, singing traditional love songs. If a couple like each other sufficiently, they leave the circle and exchange love tokens. The only rule here is that no married people may join the dance.

In the dusk, as cooking smoke began to rise throughout the village, the crowds started to disperse. Only the youngsters, some already paired off, still lingered....

C

Translated by Wang Mingjie

Weighty finery is a status symbol (1, by Wu Tinghong). The festival has ceremonial elements — the buffalo sacrifice (4, also by Wu Tinghong), the ladder of knives (3, by Lü Zhiguo), ushering in the dragon (5, by Wang Qiaoshu) — as well as pure fun: the Monkey Dance (2, by Jia Shuxin), 'eight-person swing' (6) and acrobatic variations on lion dancing (7) (last two by Wang Ping).



Batik Artistry

PHOTOS BY ZENG XIANYANG

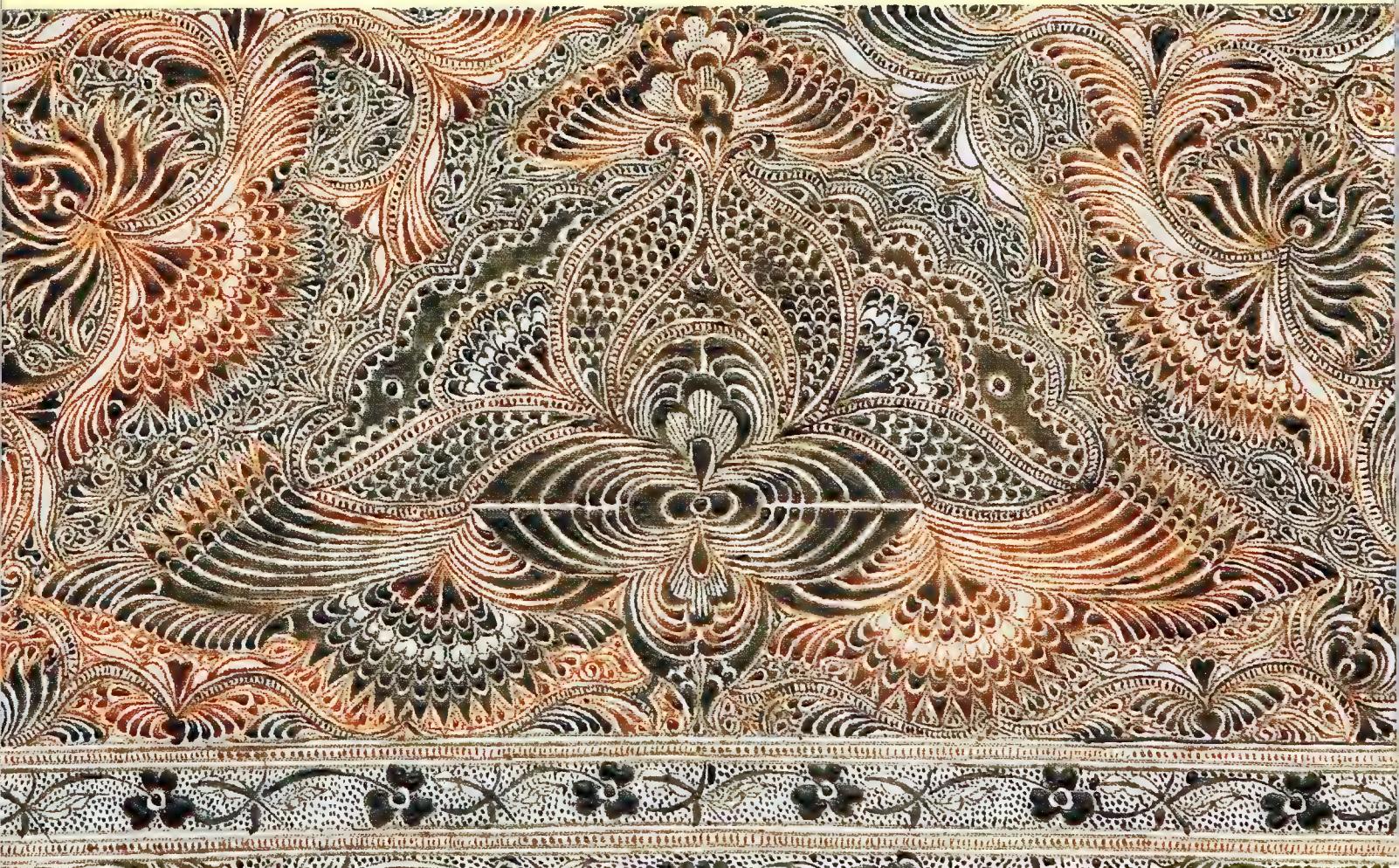
TEXT BY YIP CHUN YU

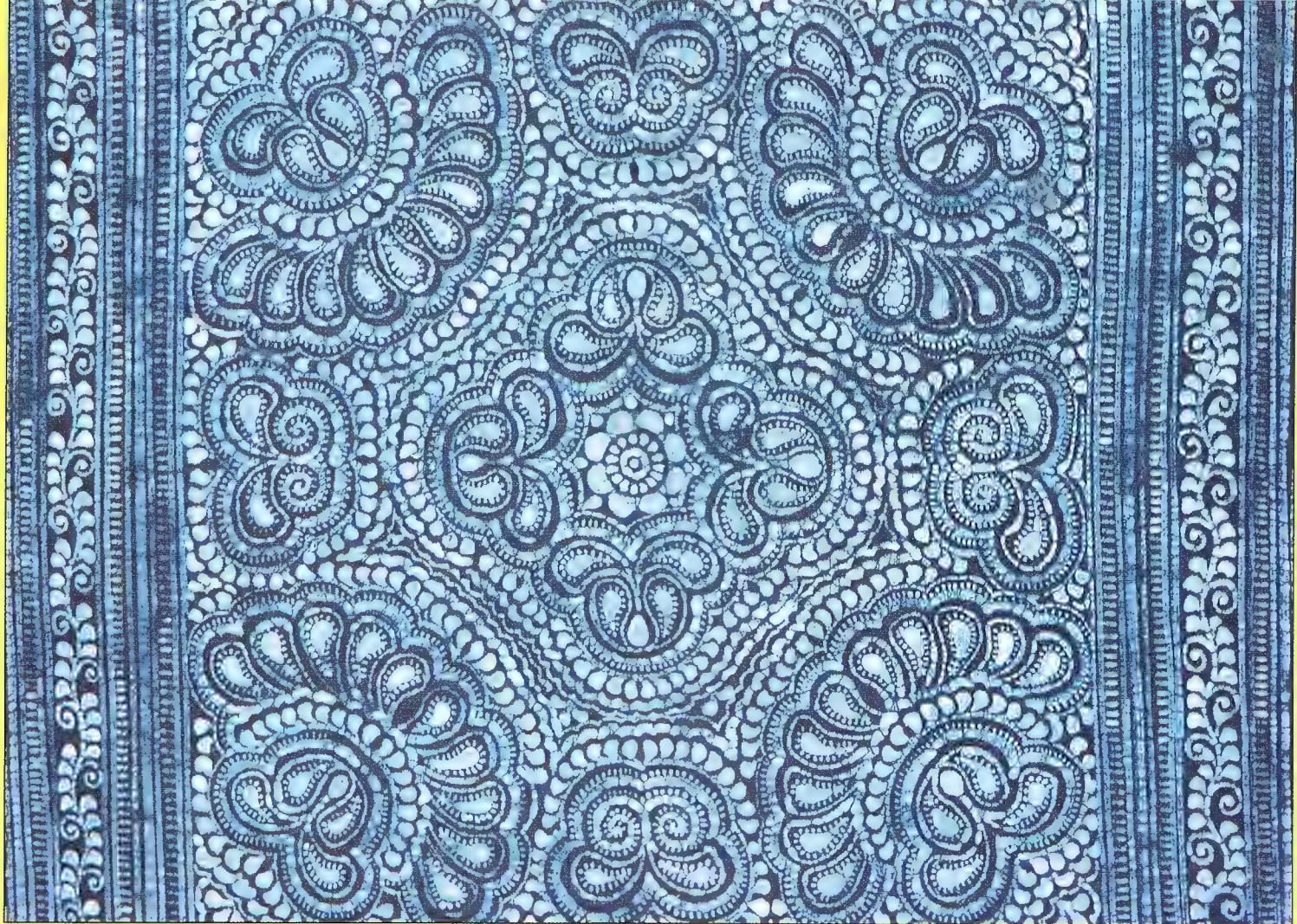
The Bouyei people who live upstream of the Huangguoshu Falls in western Guizhou along the River Baishui have worked the land for generation after generation. Agriculture is said to have been their sole source of livelihood until one year when heavy rain fell for one hundred days without stopping and all the fields were flooded. The Bouyei were greatly worried about how they would manage to live during the coming year, since all their crops had been washed away, and some were on the point of despair when there appeared from the forest a mysterious girl named Meiling. She settled down in a Bouyei settlement and began to teach the local people how to dye cloth using wax. The Bouyei learned to make designs on undyed cloth with a copper blade dipped in melted beeswax and then immerse the fabric into indigo which coloured the sections not protected by the wax. When the fabric dried, the wax was washed off in boiling water. The result was a length of beautifully patterned blue and white fabric. Meiling is also said to have taught the villagers how to make this fabric into all sorts of

garments and articles which they could then take to the country markets in the neighbourhood to exchange for rice, salt and other daily necessities. In this way the Bouyei survived the natural calamity.

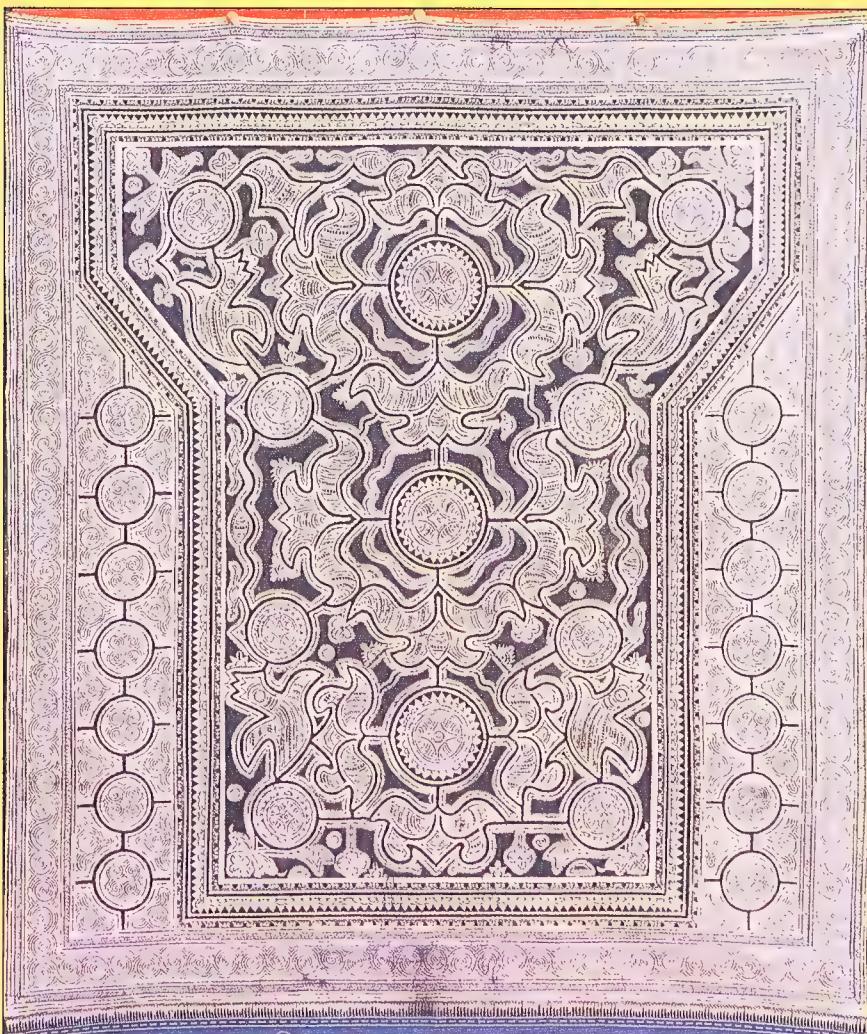
This legend says that Meiling was a divine maiden, a disciple and emissary of the Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara, sent specifically to save the Bouyei. And, according to the legend, from that time on the Bouyei used this technique of dyeing fabric during the slack farming season. As it became ever more popular, so the designs grew ever more complicated and subtle.

In historical fact, this technique first appeared during the Western Han dynasty more than two thousand years ago. Batik garments can be identified in certain of the murals in the Qianfo (Thousand Buddha) Grotto at Dunhuang in Gansu. Batiks made at the time of the Northern Dynasties (386-581), the Western Liang (400-420) of the Sixteen Kingdoms, and the Tang dynasty (618-907) have also been unearthed.





2



1



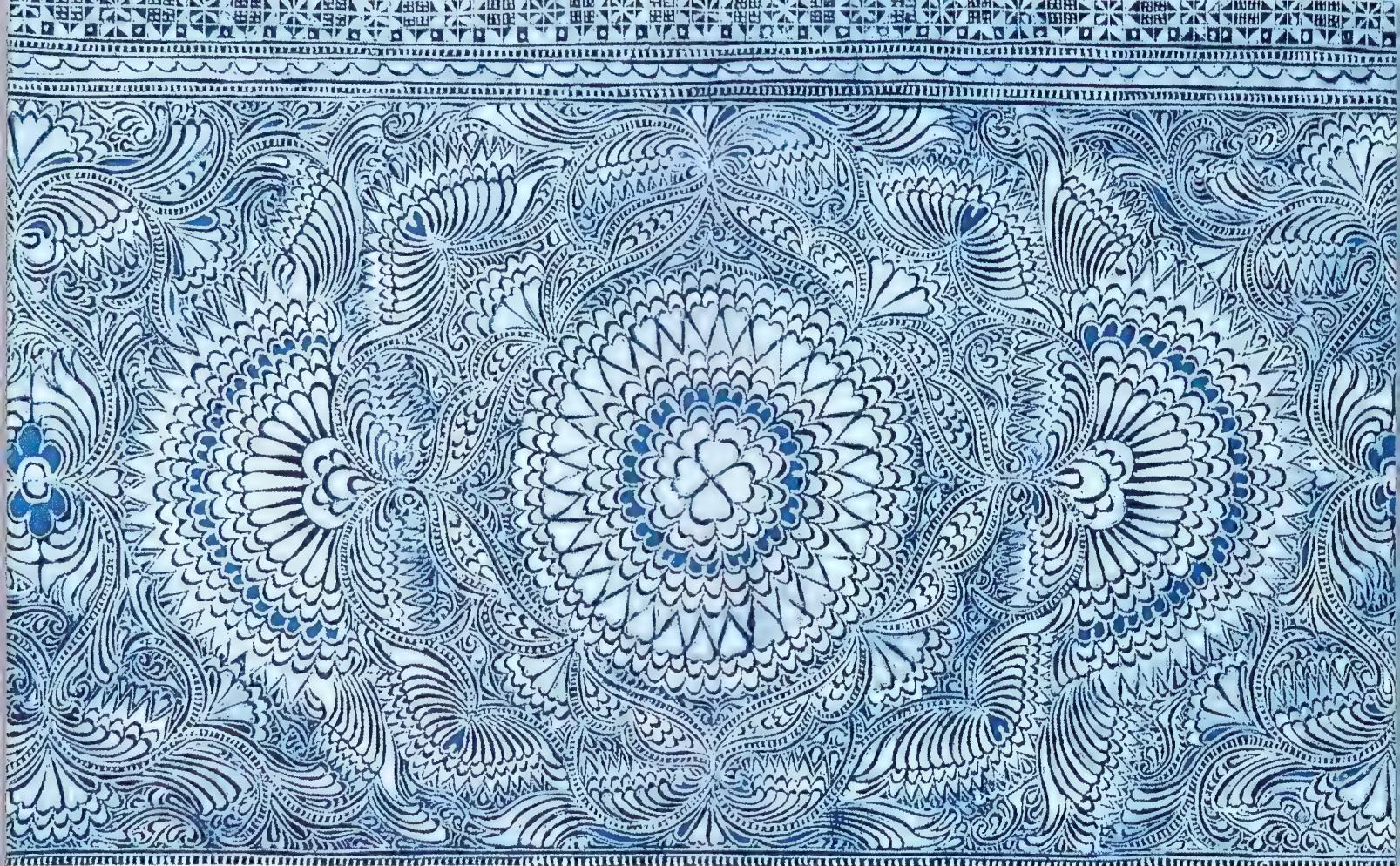
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Different approaches: flowing lines form flowers, birds and butterflies (1); paisley-type pattern with 'crackled' effect (2); geometric whorls and spirals with bird and plant motifs (3). Applying more beeswax before the third or fourth dyeing process to produce differing intensities of blue (4).

65

Batik fabric is put to a myriad uses (1, 2). Batik highlighted with embroidery (3) or swirling flowers in graduated blues (4), the effect is always delicately decorative.





In Guizhou today, apart from the Bouyei, other nationalities such as the Miao, Shui and Yi also make batik from which they produce clothing, quilt covers, straps, bags, scarves and other useful things. Obviously, each of these peoples also has its own legendary version of how batik first developed.

Harmonious Designs and Natural Themes

The designs and patterns used are generally harmonious in composition, with the blue and white evenly balanced. In the centre of a piece of batik there is usually a large flower surrounded by many smaller ones arranged symmetrically. On close inspection, one can see that each small flower is unique, which gives interest within the overall pattern. Generations of creativity and technical experience have gone into this masterly work.

It is a fact that hardened beeswax is brittle and cracks easily. As a result, during the making of batik, it may happen that the indigo dye seeps along such cracks, forming natural, random 'crackled' marks on the undyed sections. The effect is to make the design even more vivid.

As most minorities in Guizhou live in rural areas, it follows that the themes they favour in their handicrafts, including batik work, are taken from their natural surroundings. People living in the mountains and forests tend to use flower, bird, insect and butterfly motifs, while those living near rivers are more likely to take fish, shrimps, herons and frogs as their themes. The girls and women who execute this work handle the copper tools deftly and freely,

using their imagination, not just copying what others have done before them. This is what gives batik its strong sense of individuality as well as its local characteristics.

Batik-makers do not adopt themes from nature in a straightforward, realistic manner, which might well be boring. They make full use of symbolism and the abstract. One could say that they recreate nature according to its image in their own minds. A large flower may have numerous small flowers superimposed on it to represent a mass of flowers in bloom. Other motifs seem to be handled in a manner rather like Miao embroidery. Flower petals form butterflies, bats and birds; birds flutter butterfly-shaped wings, suggesting the interchangeable flow of life common to all creation.

The artistic treatment of batik in Guizhou varies not just from people to people, but from village to village. The range of designs is inexhaustible. Stable-seeming dots form a striking contrast with swirling whorls and spirals; starkly geometric patterns and flowing, natural lines form a counterpoint. With developments in technique, multicoloured batik is now also made.

In some areas, an extra element is added with coloured embroidery superimposed on the finished batik in a way which serves to highlight the pattern. The addition of red and yellow blocks of embroidery against the cool blue and white of the batik is rather like the effect of a cluster of gaily coloured balloons released into an overcast sky.

Translated by Gu Weizhou

Thousand-Armed Avalokitesvara

PHOTO BY ZHANG DEZHONG TEXT BY HU YUE

This Avalokitesvara, the Bodhisattva of Compassion, is housed in the Dabei Hall at Bao'en Monastery in Pingwu County, Northern Sichuan. First built in 1440 during the Ming dynasty, the monastery complex is said somewhat to resemble the Forbidden City in Beijing. The story goes that a local official of the time, Wang Xi, a powerful and ambitious man, constructed a residence for himself based on the layout of the imperial palace in Beijing, with the intention of one day proclaiming himself emperor. But when news of his plan leaked out, he converted the complex to a monastery and said it had been

constructed especially to celebrate the reigning emperor's birthday.

One of the major treasures of the monastery is this eight-metre-tall statue carved from *nanmu*, a precious hardwood. The thousand-armed form of the Bodhisattva is believed to signify his omnipresence and omnipotence. The figure, said to have 1,002 arms, holds a myriad items of religious and ritual significance, including liturgical instruments. The palm of each hand is painted with an eye to symbolize the vision of the cosmic god, who is particularly revered in Tibetan Buddhism.

Translated by M.K.





In the Park: Beijing Opera Alfresco

PHOTOS & TEXT BY XU JIASHU

Originating during the Qing dynasty (1644-1911) in the Chinese capital, Beijing opera has already existed for two hundred years. At the height of its popularity, the streets of Beijing — particularly those in the vicinity of Qianmen Street near the Temple of Heaven — were packed with opera houses. In these, the most expensive seats were around long tables laden with fresh fruit, sweets and tea, while ordinary members of the public had to make do with a place on a hard wooden bench.

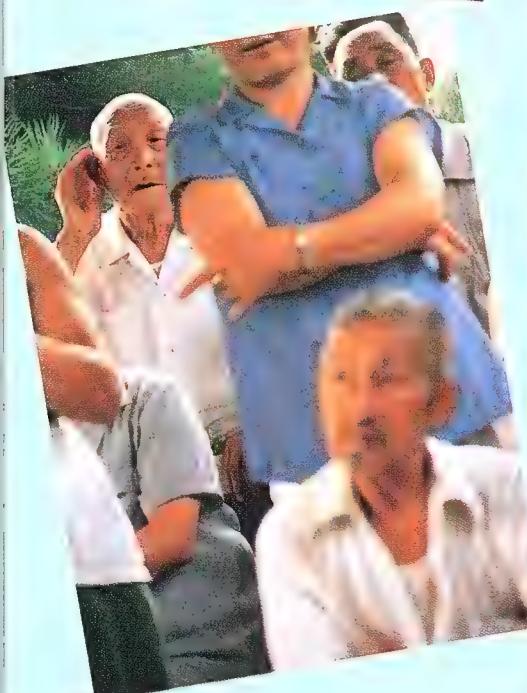
The Qing court maintained an opera troupe purely for its own pleasure. At birthdays, Lunar New Year or other traditional festivals, large-scale opera performances were an essential item on the programme. Renowned actors from outside would sometimes be summoned to perform in the Forbidden City. Private opera troupes were also kept by rich, powerful nobles and officials. But the greatest of all honours was to be invited to watch opera with the imperial family.

It is said that, at one time, almost everybody in Beijing could hum an opera tune or two. This tradition still survives today, if in a somewhat reduced form.



One Sunday morning I strolled towards Yuyuantan Park in western Beijing, a famous meeting point for Beijing opera fans. Drums and gongs greeted me even before I entered the park. Then I heard the melodious tones of the low-pitched *erhu* and the high-pitched *jinghu* (both stringed instruments played with a bow), as well as the more resonant sounds of the *suona* (horn). A male voice chimed in, singing a *laosheng* (old man) role.

As I approached the crowd which had gathered in a corner of the park, I realized that the singer was not after all a man; it was an elderly woman who was singing her heart out. 'Bravo!' cried an aged opera fan standing beside me. Others around also showed similar signs of appreciation. Her portrayal of the *laosheng* was indeed masterly, her gestures perfectly adapted to the dramatic content.



Many of the fans who had gathered in the park were retired people; some had been professors and civil servants, others workers and farmers. Some were experts on Beijing opera, others just derived much enjoyment from listening. Whenever there was a lull in the proceedings, everybody started to chat animatedly. Heated discussions sprang up as to whether or not a certain song sounded like a certain school of opera. Others reminisced about famous actors who had performed the same piece years ago.

Obviously, the need for a meaningful hobby in retirement is one of the reasons for the popularity of these informal opera gatherings, but love for a traditional art form is perhaps even stronger. Certainly, for many Beijingers, this has become an indispensable part of their Sunday. Not even the iciest wind will keep them away! G

Translated by Chapman Lee

As soon as the woman finished her song, a muscular man in his late fifties pulled a dainty red-trimmed white handkerchief from his pocket and started to sing the part of a young girl. Incongruous to hear such soft, sweet sounds emanating from such a hefty fellow!

The musicians were equally absorbed in their playing, heads and bodies moving to the rhythm of their music. One old man with a gong seemed almost in a trance, while the *suona*-player, although not so young himself, still had plenty of 'puff'.

The third singer was also elderly. He leapt into the centre of the circle and struck the brave pose of a general. After humming a few practice notes, he embarked on another *laosheng* air. As, in this case, he was using his natural voice, the strength and depth of his song won him much applause.

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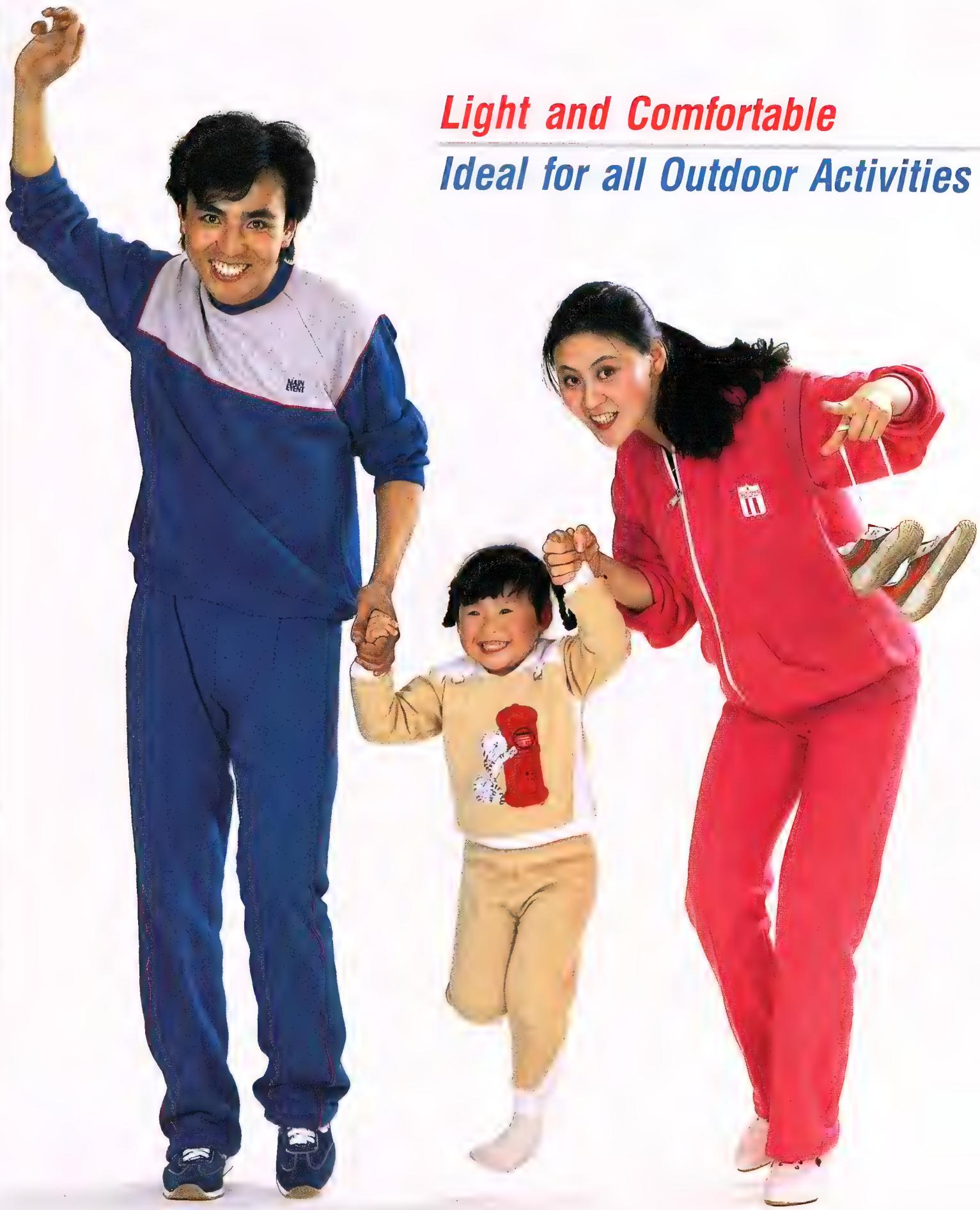
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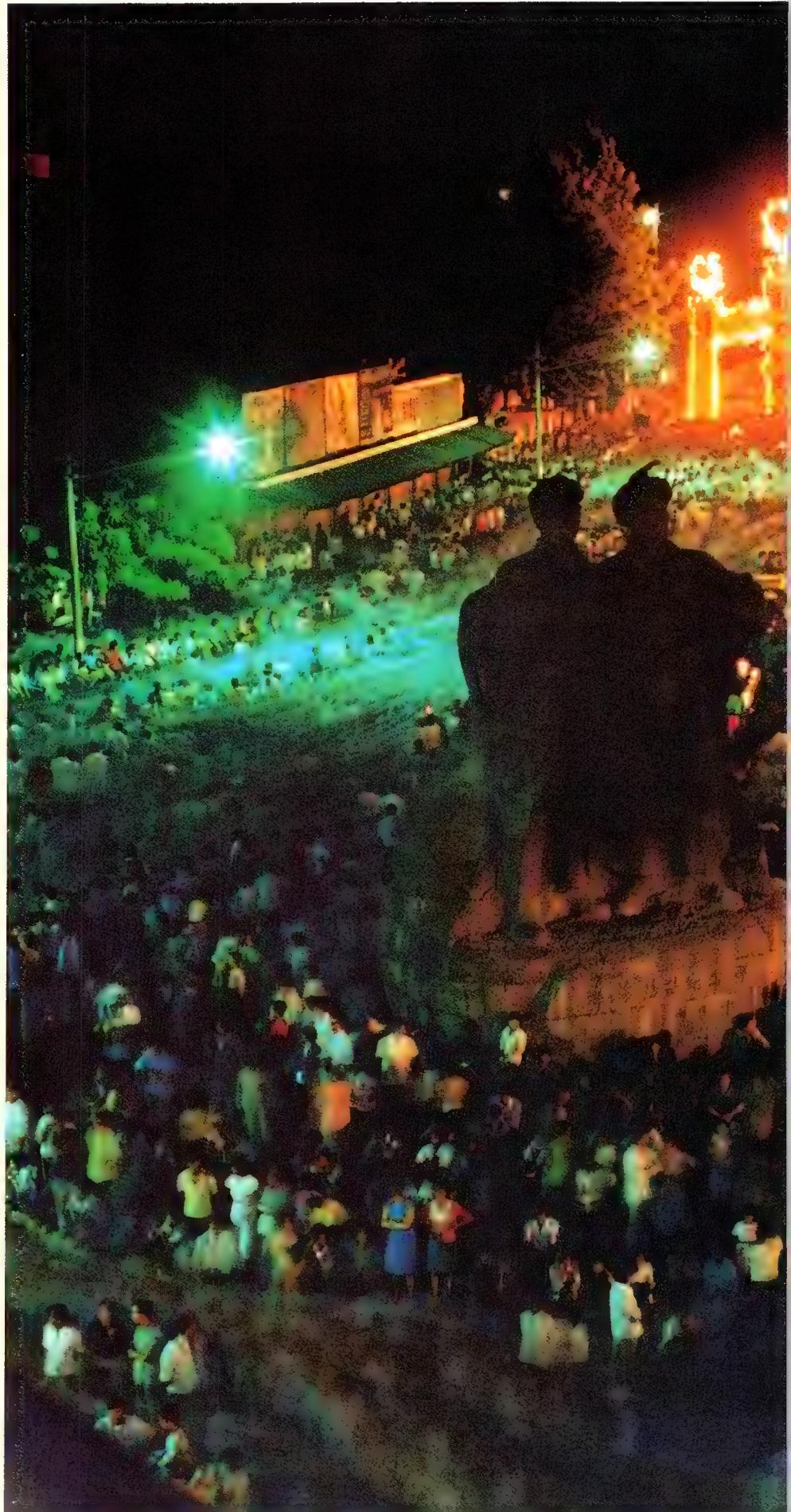
PHOTOGRAPHER:
TCHAN FOU-LI

Torch Festival

On the night of the Torch Festival, the twenty-fourth day of the sixth lunar month (around August), people flock to the city centre of Xichang, capital of the Liangshan Yi Autonomous

Prefecture in southwestern Sichuan. They are celebrating the defeat and death of the vicious deity sent by the Heavenly Emperor to collect taxes from mankind. In the legend, the Yis rise up and, lighting thousands of torches, burn the ladder leading to Heaven so that the vicious deity cannot escape.

The rapturous, animated crowds form a powerful contrast with the vast, immobile statue around which they swirl..







Buddha's Lock

Even now, in the Liangshan Mountains, the impressive 'Buddha's lock' is still worn by most Yi men. This hairstyle is said to bring the wearer good fortune. Whether or not, it both to the Yi and to the the 'Yis' and to the archaic for the out-

hairstyle is said that's true certainly adds nobility of appearance mysterious atmosphere sider.





Shepherd and Flock

The pastures scattered among the valleys and foothills of the remote, cool Liangshan Mountains provide rich grazing for hundreds of sheep. The shepherd strides tall through this natural setting, a proud, free man, no longer answerable to the slave-owning Yi clans of the past.







Market Day

There is a market for the mountain people every Sunday. On that day the quiet valley suddenly erupts with clatter and bustle as people gather from near and far. Residents of different villages in their traditional clothes come here to exchange goods and agricultural products and catch up with friends and acquaintances. It's a time of colour, pleasure and excitement.

Translated by Tai Chi Yin





Chen Jianbang

TRAVELLING ON CHINA'S RAILWAYS

ARTICLE BY TAI CHI YIN



Although it is true that civil aviation and the highway network in China have made tremendous progress in recent years, tourists will find that trains are still their best means of transport around this vast country. They have the advantage of affording plenty of insights into the Chinese way of life as well as lots of local colour.



The Network

The history of railways in China dates back to 1876, when the Wusong Railway, built by British engineers in the northern part of Shanghai, was

completed. Now, 113 years later, China's railways extend over a total of more than 53,000 kilometres, long enough to encircle the Equator 1.33 times and slightly more than the total length of railroads in the United States. Today, with the exception of Tibet, all provinces and autonomous regions on

the Chinese mainland are connected by rail in a network which radiates out from Beijing, the national capital.

In the last three decades railways have been built in the remote areas west of the Central Plains, in Gansu, Qinghai, Xinjiang, Guizhou and Sichuan; this has redressed the overall balance, as formerly railways were only constructed in the coastal areas. Moreover, the newer railways in Shaanxi, Gansu and Sichuan are by and large electrified, which has greatly enhanced communications and transport potential between the hinterland and the seaboard.

China is so vast and has such a varied topography, with innumerable mountains and rivers, that it is a herculean task to establish a comprehensive railway system. Take the southwest, for instance. There the mountains are rugged, the rivers turbulent, and communications poor. To construct the Chengdu-Kunming Railway linking the capitals of Sichuan and Yunnan, it was necessary to blast 427 tunnels through the Greater and Lesser Liangshan Mountains and the Hengduan Range as well as build 991 bridges spanning the Dadu, Jinsha, Yalong and many other rivers over the total length of 1,085 kilometres. Of the 120 stations, upwards of forty had to be located either inside tunnels or on bridges.

Another unforgettable experience for the traveller is the Qinghai-Tibet Railway from Hairag to Golmud which lies on a plateau at an average height of 3,000 metres above sea-level. Nor should we forget the Nanjiang Railway from Turpan to Korla in Xinjiang, which cuts through the Tianshan Mountains. These are marvels of railway engineering.



First Buy the Timetable!

When travelling in China, it is advisable to get hold of a copy of the *China Railway Timetable*. This is a booklet about half an inch thick which gives a complete train schedule, the names of all stations on each line and, of course, the arrival and departure times of every train. It is set out in much the same way as in other countries. A Chinese-English timetable for visitors from abroad can be purchased at bookshops and railway stations in big cities.

To consult the timetable, the prospective passenger should first locate his/her destination on the index maps on the first few pages and find out which line it is on. Unlike the system in most European and American countries, China has a special name for every railway line. In most cases, this name indicates its geographical position or its course. Thus the Beijing-Guangzhou Line links Beijing with Guangzhou, and all places along its route are classified under this line. So, if you want to travel from Beijing to Wuchang, you first look up Wuchang and discover that it is on the Beijing-Guangzhou Line. Next you turn to the specific pages indicated on the index map to find out what options you have and select the train that best fits in with your travel plans.



Train Types

Passenger trains are divided into three major categories which can usually be identified by their

numbers: an express (*tekua*) is given a number up to 99, a fast through passenger train (*zhikua*) from 100 to 300, an ordinary passenger train (*keche*) above 300.

There are fewer express trains and they stop at a limited number of stations. They are fairly well appointed and, generally speaking, they run between Beijing and major cities. Fast through trains are slower and make more stops. Their fittings are not as good and they link medium-sized cities. Thus, on the Beijing-Shanghai Line — a distance of nearly 1,500 kilometres — express train no. 13 makes only two stops and takes seventeen hours, whereas fast through train no. 161 stops at twenty-six stations and takes six hours longer to complete the journey. Ordinary passenger trains stop at every possible station along their route and are obviously only appropriate for short hops or for getting to smaller places.

Armed with your timetable, you can therefore work out that, to travel from Beijing to Wuchang, express no. 16 will get you there faster than fast through train no. 246. Another point to note is that trains running in opposite directions on the same route often have a consecutive number, odd numbers being given to outbound trains and even ones to inbound ones. For instance, the no. 15 runs from Beijing to Guangzhou, the no. 16 from Guangzhou to Beijing.

In selecting your train, there are also a few minor details to be taken into consideration. First, you should if possible try to board a train at its starting point, since then you can be sure of the exact departure time (further along the line there may well be delays). More importantly, you can be sure of a seat. Tickets sold at intermediate stations do not provide for reserved seats, and passengers boarding at those points very often have to stand all the way to their destination.

You also need to bear the arrival time in mind. It is obviously more convenient to take a slower train which arrives at the reasonable hour of nine o'clock than to take an express which, although it gets you there more quickly, dumps you in an unknown city at four o'clock in the morning.



Hard Seat or Soft Sleeper?

Having picked your train, you now need to consider what type of seat you want. Trains are usually divided into hard-seat and soft-seat cars. The former usually offer slightly padded seats arranged in rows on either side of a central aisle, two seats on one side, three on the other. These compartments can get very crowded, with people standing all down the aisle, and there is very little leg room when all the seats are occupied. The latter, more spacious, offer very comfortable seats with soft cushions and arm rests. Some trains, however, especially on branch lines, do not provide this 'soft' option.

If a train is on a run of more than five hours or if it travels overnight, it will also provide sleeping cars, again divided into two classes — hard and soft. In the case of hard sleeper, each doorless compartment giving on to the corridor contains six berths, three on each side, more or less the same as the ordinary couchettes in European long-distance trains. The upper berth offers least headroom, the one in the middle is better, while the bottom berth has enough clearance for people

to sit upright. Sheets, pillows and blankets are provided.

As for the soft sleeper, which costs twice as much, there are four berths per compartment, two on each side, and the elegant fittings include a small table with a lamp and often a potted plant, an electric fan, individual reading lights, carpet and lace curtains. Tea cups are provided, and attendants come round at intervals to serve tea and replenish hot water supplies.

Trains have a dining car for which you can purchase meal tickets and which also provides lunch boxes at fixed times (however, whether travelling hard or soft, passengers should bring their own fruit and favourite refreshments).



Ticket Tips

Now you have decided on your train and the class in which you wish to travel, but this does not mean that your problems are over and that you can set off right away. China's railway system has to cope with such countless millions of passengers, domestic and foreign, every year that there are simply not enough trains to transport them all. Consequently, the demand for tickets far outstrips the actual supply. As often as not, all the tickets for a particular train may be sold out several days in advance, with not a chance of getting any on the actual day of departure. It is *absolutely essential* to book tickets for sleepers on long-distance trains three or four days' ahead of time.

As railway stations are invariably clogged with long lines of people hoping to get tickets, foreign tourists are advised to purchase train tickets from China Travel Service (CTS) or China International Travel Service (CITS) offices. There is a small charge, but this saves a lot of trouble and time. Some big hotels also offer their guests this service. CTS and CITS are usually found in major hotels in each city. In Beijing, a special booking office has been set up at the railway station to deal with foreigners.

If the worst comes to the worst and you cannot get your sleeper ticket, you can always buy an ordinary hard or soft seat ticket and then ask the attendant to give you a sleeper once you are on the train. As a rule, trains keep a few sleepers in reserve, although this cannot of course be guaranteed. It goes without saying that you should buy the ticket for the next leg of your train journey the moment you arrive somewhere.

One last point. Supposing you decide to change your itinerary at the last minute, you can return an already purchased ticket to the railway station before the train's time of departure — your money will be refunded, less a moderate service charge. But this is only possible at the train's starting point, not at intermediate stations.

Working out the cost of a train ticket is rather complicated, but it is calculated according to the distance covered and the class of train, as well as the type of seat. There are surcharges for travelling on express or fast through trains, for air-conditioning and for sleepers.

Happy travelling!

Translated by Ren Jiazen



Lu Xun's The New-Year Sacrifice

DRAWINGS BY YONG XIANG,
HONG REN & YAO QIAO

Lu Xun (1881-1936), influential man of letters and thinker, whose real name was Zhou Shuren, was born and grew up in Shaoxing, a charming old town in eastern Zhejiang. He received a traditional schooling in the Chinese classics, but was later introduced to Western scientific thought. He was particularly influenced by Darwin's theory of evolution.

In 1902 he went to Japan to study medicine but abandoned it four years later for literature. After returning to China, he became a teacher but continued to write and to translate into Chinese the works of authors such as Gogol and Jules Verne, among others.

An editor and publisher, he was also a social activist. His use of language, his satire, powerful symbolism and attention to structure — he combined Chinese classical writing with a modern European approach — were entirely new to China, so that he is considered the founder of its modern literature.

The mass of Lu Xun's output dates from the period 1918-1927: it includes short stories such as those compiled in *Call to Arms* and *Wandering* (from which this particular example comes), essays, the prose poems collected in *Wild Grass*, and reminiscences such as *Dawn Blossoms Plucked at Dusk*.

We are pleased to present, in its entirety, a short story which is considered one of Lu Xun's masterpieces — *The New-Year Sacrifice*.

The end of the year by the old calendar does really seem a more natural end to the year for, to say nothing of the villages and towns, the very sky seems to proclaim the New Year's approach. Intermittent flashes from pallid, lowering evening clouds are followed by the rumble of crackers bidding farewell to the Hearth God¹ and, before the deafening reports of the bigger bangs close at hand have died away, the air is filled with faint whiffs of gunpowder. On one such night I returned to Luzhen, my home town. I call it my home town, but as I had not made my home there for some time I put up at the house of a certain Fourth Mr. Lu, whom I am obliged to address as Fourth Uncle since he belongs to the generation before mine

in our clan. A former Imperial Academy licentiate who believes in Neo-Confucianism,² he seemed very little changed, just slightly older, but without any beard as yet. Having exchanged some polite remarks upon meeting he observed that I was fatter, and having observed that I was fatter launched into a violent attack on the reformists.³ I did not take this personally, however, as the object of his attack was Kang Youwei. Still, conversation proved so difficult that I shortly found myself alone in the study.

I rose late the next day and went out after lunch to see relatives and friends, spending the following day in the same way. They were all very little changed, just slightly older; but every family was busy preparing for the New-Year sacrifice. This is the great end-of-year ceremony in Luzhen, during which a reverent and splendid welcome is given to the God of Fortune so that he will send good luck for the coming year. Chickens and geese are killed, pork is bought, and everything is scrubbed and scoured until all the women's arms — some still in twisted silver bracelets — turn red in the water. After the meat is cooked chopsticks are thrust into it at random, and when this "offering" is set out at dawn, incense and candles are lit and the God of Fortune is respectfully invited to come and partake of it. The worshippers are confined to men and, of course, after worshipping they go on letting off firecrackers as before. This is done every year, in every household — so long as it can afford the offering and crackers — and naturally this year was no exception.

The sky became overcast and in the afternoon it was filled with a flurry of snowflakes, some as large as plum-blossom petals, which merged with the smoke and the bustling atmosphere to make the small town a welter of confusion. By the time I had returned to my uncle's study, the roof of the house was already white with snow which made the room brighter than usual, highlighting the red stone rubbing that hung on the wall of the big character "Longevity" as written by the Taoist saint Chen Tuan.⁴ One of the pair of scrolls flanking it had fallen down and was lying loosely rolled up on the long table. The other, still in its place, bore the inscription "Understanding of principles brings peace of mind." Idly, I strolled over to the desk beneath the window to turn over the pile of books on it, but only found an apparently incomplete set of *The Kang Xi Dictionary*, the *Selected Writings of Neo-Confucian Philosophers*, and *Commentaries on the Four Books*.⁵ At all events I must leave the next day, I decided.

Besides, the thought of my meeting with Xianglin's Wife the previous day was preying on my mind. It had happened in the afternoon. On my way back from calling on a friend in the eastern part of the town, I had met her by the river and knew from the fixed look in her eyes that she was going to accost me. Of all the people I had seen during this visit to Luzhen, none had changed so much as she had. Her hair, streaked with grey five years before, was now completely white, making her appear much older than one around forty. Her shallow, dark-tinged face that looked as if it had been carved out of wood was fearfully wasted and had

lost the grief-stricken expression it had borne before. The only sign of life about her was the occasional flicker of her eyes. In one hand she had a bamboo basket containing a chipped, empty bowl; in the other, a bamboo pole, taller than herself, that was split at the bottom. She had clearly become a beggar pure and simple.

I stopped, waiting for her to come and ask for money.

"So you're back?" were her first words.

"Yes."

"That's good. You are a scholar who's travelled and seen the world. There's something I want to ask you." A sudden gleam lit up her lacklustre eyes.

This was so unexpected that surprise rooted me to the spot.

"It's this." She drew two paces nearer and lowered her voice, as if letting me into a secret. "Do dead people turn into ghosts or not?"

My flesh crept. The way she had fixed me with her eyes made a shiver run down my spine, and I felt far more nervous than when a surprise test is sprung on you at school and the teacher insists on standing over you. Personally, I had never bothered myself in the least about whether spirits existed or not; but what was the best answer to give her now? I hesitated for a moment, reflecting that the people here still believed in spirits, but she seemed to have her doubts, or rather hopes — she hoped for life after death and dreaded it at the same time. Why increase the sufferings of someone with a wretched life? For her sake, I thought, I'd better say there was.

"Quite possibly, I'd say," I told her falteringly.

"That means there must be a hell too?"

"What, hell?" I faltered, very taken aback. "Hell? Logically speaking, there should be too — but not necessarily. Who cares anyway?"

"Then will all the members of a family meet again after death?"

"Well, as to whether they'll meet again or not..." I realized now what an utter fool I was. All my hesitation and manoeuvring had been no match for her three questions. Promptly taking fright, I decided to recant. "In that case ... actually, I'm not sure.... In fact, I'm not sure whether there are ghosts or not either."

To avoid being pressed by any further questions I walked off, then beat a hasty retreat to my uncle's house, feeling thoroughly disconcerted. I may have given her a dangerous answer, I was thinking. Of course, she may just be feeling lonely because everybody else is celebrating now, but could she have had something else in mind? Some premonition? If she had had some other idea, and something happens as a result, then my answer should indeed be partly responsible.... Then I laughed at myself for brooding so much over a chance meeting when it could have no serious significance. No wonder certain educationists called me neurotic. Besides, I had distinctly declared, "I'm not sure," contradicting the whole of my answer. This meant that even if something did happen, it would have nothing at all to do with me.

"I'm not sure" is a most useful phrase.

Bold inexperienced youngsters often take it

upon themselves to solve problems or choose doctors for other people, and if by any chance things turn out badly they may well be held to blame; but by concluding their advice with this evasive expression they achieve blissful immunity from reproach. The necessity for such a phrase was brought home to me still more forcibly now, since it was indispensable even in speaking with a beggar woman.

However, I remained uneasy, and even after a night's rest my mind dwelt on it with a certain sense of foreboding. The oppressive snowy weather and the gloomy study increased my uneasiness. I had better leave the next day and go back to the city. A large dish of plain shark's fin stew at the Fu Xing Restaurant used to cost only a dollar. I wondered if this cheap delicacy had risen in price or not. Though my good companions of the old days had scattered, that shark's fin must still be sampled even if I were on my own. Whatever happened I would leave the next day, I decided.

Since, in my experience, things I hoped would not happen and felt should not happen invariably did occur all the same, I was much afraid this would prove another such case. And, sure enough, the situation soon took a strange turn. Towards evening I heard what sounded like a discussion in the inner room, but the conversation ended before long and my uncle walked away observing loudly, "What a moment to choose! Now of all times! Isn't that proof enough she was a bad lot?"

My initial astonishment gave way to a deep uneasiness; I felt that this had something to do with me. I looked out of the door, but no one was there. I waited impatiently till their servant came in before dinner to brew tea. Then at last I had a chance to make some inquiries.

"Who was Mr. Lu so angry with just now?" I asked.

"Why, Xianglin's Wife, of course," was the curt reply.

"Xianglin's Wife? Why?" I pressed.

"She's gone."

"Dead?" My heart missed a beat. I started and must have changed colour. But since the servant kept his head lowered, all this escaped him. I pulled myself together enough to ask.

"When did she die?"

"When? Last night or today — I'm not sure."

"How did she die?"

"How? Of poverty of course." After this stolid answer he withdrew, still without having raised his head to look at me.

My agitation was only short-lived, however. For now that my premonition had come to pass, I no longer had to seek comfort in my own "I'm not sure," or his "dying of poverty," and my heart was growing lighter. Only from time to time did I still feel a little guilty. Dinner was served, and my uncle impressively kept me company. Tempted as I was to ask about Xianglin's Wife, I knew that, although he had read that "ghosts and spirits are manifestations of the dual forces of Nature,"⁶ he was still so superstitious that on the eve of the New-Year sacrifice it would be unthinkable to mention anything like death or illness. In case of

necessity one should use veiled allusions, but since this was unfortunately beyond me I had to bite back the questions which kept rising to the tip of my tongue. And my uncle's solemn expression suddenly made me suspect that he looked on me too as a bad lot who had chosen this moment, now of all times, to come and trouble him. To set his mind at rest as quickly as I could, I told him at once of my plan to leave Luzhen the next day and go back to the city. He did not press me to stay, and at last the uncomfortably quiet meal came to an end.

Winter days are short, and because it was snowing darkness had already enveloped the whole town. All was stir and commotion in the lighted houses, but outside was remarkably quiet. And the snowflakes hissing down on the thick snowdrifts intensified one's sense of loneliness. Seated alone in the amber light of the vegetable-oil lamp I reflected that this wretched and forlorn woman, abandoned in the dust like a worn-out toy of which its owners have tired, had once left her own imprint in the dust, and those who enjoyed life must have wondered at her for wishing to live on; but now at last she had been swept away by death. Whether spirits existed or not I did not know; but in this world of ours the end of futile existence, the removal of someone whom others are tired of seeing, was just as well both for them and for the individual concerned. Occupied with these reflections, I listened quietly to the hissing of the snow outside, until little by little I felt more relaxed.

But the fragments of her life that I had seen or heard about before combined now to form a whole.

She was not from Luzhen. Early one winter, when my uncle's family wanted a new maid, Old Mrs. Wei the go-between brought her along. She had a white mourning band round her hair and was wearing a black skirt, blue jacket, and pale green bodice. Her age was about twenty-six, and though her face was sallow her cheeks were red.



Xianglin's Wife is introduced to Fourth Uncle's household

Old Mrs. Wei introduced her as Xianglin's Wife, a neighbour of her mother's family, who wanted to go out to work now that her husband had died. My uncle frowned at this, and my aunt knew that he disapproved of taking on a widow. She looked just the person for them, though, with her big strong hands and feet; and, judging by her

downcast eyes and silence, she was a good worker who would know her place. So my aunt ignored my uncle's frown and kept her. During her trial period she worked from morning till night as if she found resting irksome, and proved strong enough to do the work of a man; so on the third day she was taken on for five hundred cash a month.

Everybody called her Xianglin's Wife and no one asked her own name, but since she had been introduced by someone from Wei Village as a neighbour, her surname was presumably also Wei. She said little, only answering briefly when asked a question. Thus it took them a dozen days or so to find out bit by bit that she had a strict mother-in-law at home and a brother-in-law of ten or so, old enough to cut wood. Her husband, who had died that spring, had been a woodcutter too, and had been ten years younger than she was. This little was all they could learn.

Time passed quickly. She went on working as hard as ever, not caring what she ate, never sparing herself. It was generally agreed that the Lu family's maid actually got through more work than a hard-working man. At the end of the year, she swept and mopped the floors, killed the chickens and geese, and sat up to boil the sacrificial meat, all single-handed, so that they did not need to hire extra help. And she for her part was quite contented. Little by little the trace of a smile appeared at the corners of her mouth, while her face became whiter and plumper.

Just after the New Year she came back from washing rice by the river most upset because in the distance she had seen a man, pacing up and down on the opposite bank, who looked like her husband's elder cousin — very likely he had come in search of her. When my aunt in alarm pressed her for more information, she said nothing. As soon as my uncle knew of this he frowned.

"That's bad," he observed. "She must have run away."

Before very long this inference was confirmed.

About a fortnight later, just as this incident was beginning to be forgotten, Old Mrs. Wei suddenly brought along a woman in her thirties whom she introduced as Xianglin's mother. Although this woman looked like the hill-dweller she was, she behaved with great self-possession and had a ready tongue in her head. After the usual civilities she apologized for coming to take her daughter-in-law back, explaining that early spring was a busy time and they were short-handed at home with only old people and children around.

¹ On the twenty-third of the twelfth lunar month the Hearth God was supposed to go up to heaven to make a report.

² The Confucian school in the Song Dynasty (960-1279) which claimed that all things in the universe and the feudal order were ordained by "Reason" and could never change.

³ Referring to Kang Youwei, Liang Qichao and others who in 1898, supported by Emperor Guang Xu, started a bourgeois reform movement. After this was crushed by the die-hards, Kang Youwei and others fled abroad and organized a royalist group advocating constitutional monarchy.

⁴ A tenth-century hermit.

⁵ Compiled by Luo Pei in the Qing Dynasty for use in the imperial examinations.

⁶ This was said by the Song Dynasty Neo-Confucian Zhang Zai.

"If her mother-in-law wants her back, there's nothing more to be said," was my uncle's comment.

Thereupon her wages were reckoned up. They came to 1,750 cash, all of which she had left in the keeping of her mistress without spending any of it. My aunt gave the entire sum to Xianglin's mother, who took her daughter-in-law's clothes as well, expressed her thanks, and left. By this time it was noon.

"Oh, the rice! Didn't Xianglin's Wife go to wash the rice?" exclaimed my aunt some time later. It was probably hunger that reminded her of lunch.

A general search started then for the rice-washing basket. My aunt searched the kitchen, then the hall, then the bedroom; but not a sign of the basket was to be seen. My uncle could not find it outside either, until he went right down to the riverside. Then he saw it set down fair and square on the bank, some vegetables beside it.

Some people on the bank told him that a boat with a white awning had moored there that morning but, since the awning covered the boat completely, they had no idea who was inside and had paid no special attention to begin with. But when Xianglin's Wife had arrived and was kneeling down to wash rice, two men who looked as if they came from the hills had jumped off the boat and seized her. Between them they dragged her on board. She wept and shouted at first but soon fell silent, probably because she was gagged. Then along came two women, a stranger and Old Mrs. Wei. It was difficult to see clearly into the boat, but the victim seemed to be lying, tied up, on the planking.



She is bundled off by her mother-in-law

"Disgraceful! Still..." said my uncle.

That day my aunt cooked the midday meal herself, and their son Aniu lit the fire.

After lunch Old Mrs. Wei came back.

"Disgraceful!" said my uncle.

"What's the meaning of this? How dare you show your face here again?" My aunt, who was washing up, started fuming as soon as she saw her. "First you recommended her, then help them carry her off, causing such a shocking commotion. What will people think? Are you trying to make fools of our family?"

"Aiya, I was completely taken in! I've come specially to clear this up. How was I to know she'd left home without permission from her mother-in-law when she asked me to find her work? I'm

sorry, Mr. Lu. I'm sorry, Mrs. Lu. I'm growing so stupid and careless in my old age, I've let my patrons down. It's lucky for me you're such kind, generous people, never hard on those below you. I promise to make it up to you by finding someone good this time."

"Still..." said my uncle.

That concluded the affair of Xianglin's Wife, and before long it was forgotten.

My aunt was the only one who still spoke of Xianglin's Wife. This was because most of the maids taken on afterwards turned out to be lazy or greedy, or both, none of them giving satisfaction. At such times she would invariably say to herself, "I wonder what's become of her now?" — implying that she would like to have her back. But by the next New Year she too had given up hope.

The first month was nearing its end when Old Mrs. Wei called on my aunt to wish her a happy New Year. Already tipsy, she explained that the reason for her coming so late was that she had been visiting her family in Wei Village in the hills for a few days. The conversation, naturally, soon touched on Xianglin's Wife.

"Xianglin's Wife?" cried Old Mrs. Wei cheerfully. "She's in luck now. When her mother-in-law dragged her home, she'd promised her to the sixth son of the Ho family in Ho Glen. So a few days after her return they put her in the bridal chair and sent her off."

"Gracious! What a mother-in-law!" exclaimed my aunt.

"Ah, madam, you really talk like a great lady! This is nothing to poor folk like us who live up in the hills. That young brother-in-law of hers still had no wife. If they didn't marry her off, where would the money have come from to get him one? Her mother-in-law is a clever, capable woman, a fine manager; so she married her off into the mountains. If she'd betrothed her to a family in the same village, she wouldn't have made so much; but as very few girls are willing to take a husband deep in the mountains at the back of beyond, she got eighty thousand cash. Now the second son has a wife, who cost only fifty thousand; and after paying the wedding expenses she's still over ten thousand in hand. Wouldn't you call her a fine manager?"

"But was Xianglin's Wife willing?"

"It wasn't a question of willing or not. Of course any woman would make a row about it. All they had to do was tie her up, shove her into the chair, carry her to the man's house, force on her the bridal headdress, make her bow in the ceremonial hall, lock the two of them into their room — and that was that. But Xianglin's Wife is quite a character. I heard that she made a terrible scene. It was working for a scholar's family, everyone said, that made her different from other people. We go-betweens see life, madam. Some widows sob and shout when they remarry; some threaten to kill themselves; some refuse to go through the ceremony of bowing to heaven and earth after they've been carried to the man's house; some even smash the wedding candlesticks. But

Xianglin's Wife was really extraordinary. They said she screamed and cursed all the way to Ho Glen,



The widow makes an unwilling bride

so that she was completely hoarse by the time they got there. When they dragged her out of the chair, no matter how the two chair-bearers and her brother-in-law held her, they couldn't make her go through the ceremony. The moment they were off guard and had loosened their grip — gracious Buddha! — she bashed her head on a corner of the altar, gashing it so badly that blood spurted out. Even though they smeared on two handfuls of incense ashes and tied it up with two pieces of red cloth, they couldn't stop the bleeding. It took quite a few of them to shut her up finally with the man in the bridal chamber, but even then she went on cursing. Oh, it was really...." Shaking her head, she lowered her eyes and fell silent.

"And what then?" asked my aunt.

"They said that the next day she didn't get up." Old Mrs. Wei raised her eyes.

"And after?"

"After? She got up. At the end of the year she had a baby, a boy, who was reckoned as two this New Year. These few days when I was at home, some people back from a visit to Ho Glen said they'd seen her and her son, and both mother and child are plump. There's no mother-in-law over her, her man is a strong fellow who can earn a living, and the house belongs to them. Oh, yes, she's in luck all right."

After this event my aunt gave up talking of Xianglin's Wife.

But one autumn, after two New Years had passed since this good news of Xianglin's Wife, she once more crossed the threshold of my uncle's house, placing her round bulb-shaped basket on the table and her small bedding-roll under the eaves. As before, she had a white mourning band round her hair and was wearing a black skirt, blue jacket, and pale green bodice. Her face was sallow, her cheeks no longer red; and her downcast eyes, stained with tears, had lost their brightness. Just as before, it was Old Mrs. Wei who brought her to my aunt.

"It was really a bolt from the blue," she explained compassionately. "Her husband was a strong young fellow; who'd have thought that typhoid fever would carry him off? He'd taken a turn for the better, but then he ate some cold rice and got worse again. Luckily she had the boy and

she can work — she's able to gather firewood, pick tea, or raise silkworms — so she could have managed on her own. But who'd have thought that the child, too, would be carried off by a wolf? It was nearly the end of spring, yet a wolf came to the glen — who could have guessed that? Now she's all on her own. Her husband's elder brother has taken over the house and turned her out. So she's no way to turn for help except to her former mistress. Luckily this time there's nobody to stop her and you happen to be needing someone, madam. That's why I've brought her here. I think someone used to your ways is much better than a new hand...."

"I was really too stupid, really...." put in Xianglin's Wife, raising her lacklustre eyes. "All I knew was that when it snowed and wild beasts up in the hills had nothing to eat, they might come to the villages. I didn't know that in spring they might come too. I got up at dawn and opened the door, filled a small basket with beans and told our Amao to sit on the doorstep and shell them. He was such a good boy; he always did as he was told, and out he went. Then I went to the back to chop wood and wash the rice, and when the rice was in the pan I wanted to steam the beans. I called Amao, but there was no answer. When I went out to look there were beans all over the ground but no Amao. He never went to the neighbours' houses to play; and, sure enough, though I asked everywhere he wasn't there. I got so worried, I begged people to help me find him. Not until that afternoon, after searching high and low, did they try the gully. There they saw one of his little shoes caught on a bramble. 'That's bad,' they said. 'A wolf must have got him.' And sure enough, further on, there he was lying in the wolf's den, all his innards eaten away, still clutching that little basket tight in his hand...." At this point she broke down and could not go on.



A new start

She was still known as Xianglin's Wife.

But now she was a very different woman. She had not worked there more than two or three days before her mistress realized that she was not as quick as before. Her memory was much worse too, while her face, like a death-mask, never showed the least trace of a smile. Already my aunt was expressing herself as not too satisfied. Though my uncle had frowned as before when she first arrived, they always had such trouble finding servants that he raised no serious objections, simply warning his wife on the quiet that while such people might seem very pathetic they exerted a bad moral influence. She could work for them but must have nothing to do with ancestral sacrifices. They would have to prepare all the dishes themselves. Otherwise they would be unclean and the ancestors would not accept them.

The most important events in my uncle's household were ancestral sacrifices, and formerly these had kept Xianglin's Wife especially busy, but now she had virtually nothing to do. As soon as the table had been placed in the centre of the hall and a front curtain fastened around its legs, she started setting out the winecups and chopsticks in the way she still remembered.

"Put those down, Xianglin's Wife," cried my aunt hastily. "Leave that to me."

She drew back sheepishly then and went for the candlesticks.

"Put those down, Xianglin's Wife," cried my aunt again in haste. "I'll fetch them."

After walking round in the hall several times without finding anything to do, she moved doubtfully away. All she could do that day was to sit by the stove and feed the fire.

The townspeople still called her Xianglin's Wife, but in quite a different tone from before; and although they still talked to her, their manner was colder. Quite impervious to this, staring straight in front of her, she would tell everybody the story which night or day was never out of her mind.

"I was really too stupid, really," she would say. "All I knew was that when it snowed and the wild beasts up in the hills had nothing to eat, they might come to the villages. I didn't know that in spring they might come too. I got up at dawn and opened the door, filled a small basket with beans and told our Amao to sit on the doorstep and shell them. He was such a good boy; he always did as he was told, and out he went. Then I went to the back

to chop wood and wash the rice, and when the rice was in the pan I wanted to steam the beans. I called Amao, but there was no answer. When I went out to look, there were beans all over the ground but no Amao. He never went to the neighbours' houses to play; and, sure enough, though I asked everywhere he wasn't there. I got so worried, I begged people to help me find him. Not until that afternoon, after searching high and low, did they try the gully. There they saw one of his little shoes caught on a bramble. 'That's bad,' they said. 'A wolf must have got him.' And sure enough, further on, there he was lying in the wolf's den, all his innards eaten away, still clutching that little basket tight in his hand...." At this point her voice would be choked with tears.

This story was so effective that men hearing it often stopped smiling and walked blankly away, while the women not only seemed to forgive her but wiped the contemptuous expression off their faces and added their tears to hers. Indeed, some old women who had not heard her in the street sought her out specially to hear her sad tale. And when she broke down, they too shed the tears which had gathered in their eyes, after which they sighed and went away satisfied, exchanging eager comments.



A tale repeated incessantly

As for her, she asked nothing better than to tell her sad story over and over again, often gathering three or four hearers around her. But before long everybody knew it so well that no trace of a tear could be seen even in the eyes of the most kindly, Buddha-invoking old ladies. In the end, practically the whole town could recite it by heart and were bored and exasperated to hear it repeated.

"I was really too stupid, really," she would begin.

"Yes. All you knew was that in snowy weather, when the wild beasts in the mountains had nothing to eat, they might come down to the villages." Cutting short her recital abruptly, they walked away.

She would stand there open-mouthed, staring after them stupidly, and then wander off as if she too were bored by the story. But she still tried hopefully to lead up from other topics such as small baskets and other peoples' children to the story of her Amao. At the sight of a child of two or three she would say, "Ah, if my Amao were alive he'd be just that size...."



Reliving her son's sad fate

My aunt had been undecided at first, but the rims of her eyes were rather red by the time Xianglin's Wife broke off. After a moment's thought she told her to take her things to the servants' quarters. Old Mrs. Wei heaved a sigh, as if a great weight had been lifted from her mind; and Xianglin's Wife, looking more relaxed than when first she came, went off quietly to put away her bedding without having to be told the way. So she started work again as a maid in Luzhen.

Children would take fright at the look in her eyes and clutch the hem of their mothers' clothes to tug them away. Left by herself again, she would eventually walk blankly away. In the end everybody knew what she was like. If a child were present they would ask with a spurious smile, "If your Amao were alive, Xianglin's Wife, wouldn't he be just that size?"

She may not have realized that her tragedy, after being generally savoured for so many days, had long since grown so stale that it now aroused only revulsion and disgust. But she seemed to sense the cold mockery in their smiles, and the fact that there was no need for her to say any more. So she would simply look at them in silence.

New-Year preparations always start in Luzhen on the twentieth day of the twelfth lunar month. That year my uncle's household had to take on a temporary man-servant. And since there was more than he could do they asked Amah Liu to help by killing the chickens and geese; but being a devout vegetarian who would not kill living creatures, she would only wash the sacrificial vessels. Xianglin's Wife, with nothing to do but feed the fire, sat there at a loose end watching Amah Liu as she worked. A light snow began to fall.

"Ah, I was really too stupid," said Xianglin's Wife as if to herself, looking at the sky and sighing.

"There you go again, Xianglin's Wife." Amah Liu glanced with irritation at her face. "Tell me, wasn't that when you got that scar on your forehead?"

All the reply she received was a vague murmur.

"Tell me this: What made you willing after all?"

"Willing?"

"Yes. Seems to me you must have been willing. Otherwise...."

"Oh, you don't know how strong he was."

"I don't believe it. I don't believe he was so strong that you with your strength couldn't have kept him off. You must have ended up willing. That talk of his being so strong is just an excuse."

"Why ... just try for yourself and see." She smiled.

Amah Liu's lined face broke into a smile too, wrinkling up like a walnut-shell. Her small beady eyes swept the other woman's forehead, then fastened on her eyes. At once Xianglin's Wife stopped smiling, as if embarrassed, and turned her eyes away to watch the snow.

"That was really a bad bargain you struck, Xianglin's Wife," said Amah Liu mysteriously. "If you'd held out longer or knocked yourself to death outright, that would have been better. As it is, you're guilty of a great sin though you lived less than two years with your second husband. Just think: when you go down to the lower world, the ghosts of both men will start fighting over you. Which ought to have you? The King of Hell will have to saw you into two and divide you between them. I feel it really is...."

Xianglin's Wife's face registered terror then. This was something no one had told her up in the mountains.

"Better guard against that in good time, I say. Go to the Temple of the Tutelary God and buy a threshold to be trampled on instead of you by

thousands of people. If you atone for your sins in this life you'll escape torment after death."

Xianglin's Wife said nothing at the time, but she must have taken this advice to heart, for when she got up the next morning there were dark rims round her eyes. After breakfast she went to the Temple of the Tutelary God at the west end of the town and asked to buy a threshold as an offering.



Paying for a threshold to atone for her sins

At first the priest refused, only giving a grudging consent after she was reduced to tears of desperation. The price charged was twelve thousand cash.

She had long since given up talking to people after their contemptuous reception of Amao's story; but as word of her conversation with Amah Liu spread, many of the townsfolk took a fresh interest in her and came once more to provoke her into talking. The topic, of course, had changed to the scar on her forehead.

"Tell me, Xianglin's Wife, what made you willing in the end?" one would ask.

"What a waste, to have bashed yourself like that for nothing," another would chime in, looking at her scar.

She must have known from their smiles and tone of voice that they were mocking her, for she simply stared at them without a word and finally did not even turn her head. All day long she kept her lips tightly closed, bearing on her head the scar considered by everyone as a badge of shame, while she shopped, swept the floor, washed the vegetables and prepared the rice in silence. Nearly a year went by before she took her accumulated wages from my aunt, changed them for twelve silver dollars, and asked for leave to go to the west end of the town. In less time than it takes for a meal she was back again, looking much comforted. With an unaccustomed light in her eyes, she told my aunt contentedly that she had now offered up a threshold in the Temple of the Tutelary God.

When the time came for the ancestral sacrifice at the winter solstice she worked harder than ever, and as soon as my aunt took out the sacrificial vessels and helped Aniu to carry the table into the middle of the hall, she went confidently to fetch the winecups and chopsticks.

"Put those down, Xianglin's Wife!" my aunt called hastily.

She withdrew her hand as if scorched, her face

turned ashen grey, and instead of fetching the candlesticks she just stood there in a daze until my uncle came in to burn some incense and told her to go away. This time the change in her was phenomenal: the next day her eyes were sunken, her spirit seemed broken. She took fright very easily too, afraid not only of the dark and of shadows, but of meeting anyone. Even the sight of her own master or mistress set her trembling like a mouse that had strayed out of its hole in broad daylight. The rest of the time she would sit stupidly as if carved out of wood. In less than half a year her hair had turned grey, and her memory had deteriorated so much that she often forgot to go and wash the rice.

"What's come over Xianglin's Wife? We should never have taken her on again," my aunt would sometimes say in front of her, as if to warn her.

But there was no change in her, no sign that she would ever recover her wits. So they decided to get rid of her and tell her to go back to Old Mrs. Wei. That was what they were saying, at least, while I was there; and, judging by subsequent developments, this is evidently what they must have done. But whether she started begging as soon as she left my uncle's house, or whether she went first to Old Mrs. Wei and later became a beggar, I do not know.



Xianglin's Wife, now a beggar, meets her end

I was woken up by the noisy explosion of crackers close at hand and, from the faint glow shed by the yellow oil lamp and the bangs of fireworks as my uncle's household celebrated the sacrifice, I knew that it must be nearly dawn. Listening drowsily I heard vaguely the ceaseless explosion of crackers in the distance. It seemed to me that the whole town was enveloped by the dense cloud of noise in the sky, mingling with the whirling snowflakes. Enveloped in this medley of sound I relaxed; the doubt which had preyed on my mind from dawn till night was swept clean away by the festive atmosphere, and I felt only that the saints of heaven and earth had accepted the sacrifice and incense and were reeling with intoxication in the sky, preparing to give Luzhen's people boundless good fortune.

February 7, 1924

Translated by Yang Xianyi and Gladys Yang

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Unforgettable Dali

Dali is a small Chinese town located in northwestern Yunnan Province. Surrounded by fields and mountains, the old town is in no way cowed by this landscape; it nestles into it in all its splendour beside magnificent Lake Erhai. The Cangshan Mountains preside over the sapphire-blue waters of the lake and trail a ribbon of clouds which seem always to have formed an integral part of the scene, so harmonious, still and tranquil is everything.

This is a paradise for tourists, especially photographers, in view of the beauty of the light. To get there, you have to spend seven hours in a bus from Kunming along the very winding Yunnan-Burma Highway. Yunnan is a sunny and fertile region of valleys, hills and mountains among which lives a whole constellation of minority peoples. There are at least twenty-two different minorities there: Zhuang, Hui, Yi, Miao, Tibetan, Mongol, Yao, Bai, Hani, Dai, Lisu, Lahu, Va, Naxi, Jingpo, Bulang, Pumi, Nu, Achang, Benglong, Jinuo and Drung. The Bai are among the most numerous: there are more than a million of them.

The bus terminates in Xiaguan, the major city of the Dali Bai Autonomous Prefecture, where we piled into a very mini minibus for the fifteen kilometres' ride north beside the lake and rice paddies to the gates of Dali. Our tiredness vanished immediately and we were enchanted from the moment we arrived.

Dali has a long history. It was the capital of the Kingdom of Nanzhao during the Tang dynasty (618-907), and then of the independent Kingdom of Dali during the Song dynasty (960-1279). In 1252 it was sacked by Mongol troops on the orders of Kublai Khan. For five centuries it was the political, cultural and economic centre of Yunnan, a position today held by Kunming.

It was only recently opened to foreign travellers (in 1986). Although it is off the beaten track, its popularity continues to grow. This is an ideal place to relax, to break the rhythm of a long trip around China which, as one knows, is not always exactly a picnic. Time goes by so fast and so congenially in Dali that it is easy to stay there far longer than one first intended.

The Bai wear their traditional costume with pride: the men are dressed in sombre navy blue, but the women are striking in their white blouses, red sleeveless jackets with embroidery around the opening and colourful turbans. The girls are charming, the children real dolls! We had the chance to attend the Spring Butterfly Festival where we saw the Bai in their gala best. The youngest were irresistible, slung in embroidered baby carriers; they all wore multicoloured hats made by hand, sometimes enriched with additional pompoms and little bells. It was chaos trying to get to the site of the festival, chaos piling into the lorries ... and absolute slaughter trying to get back afterwards! But, despite everything, the festival left us with a mass of memories.

There are any number of walks to be made around Dali. For example, to the three ancient pagodas which tower beside the lake. On the basis of their style, the pagodas are said to have been built during Tang times. Influenced by Buddhism, the devout are thought to have constructed these three pagodas, known as the Chongsheng Santa, to avert natural disasters such as earthquakes and floods. At the top of the highest structure, four bronze birds look out over the lake and protect the natural environment.

One can also climb up on the mountain behind Dali to a Buddhist monastery. This is a good ramble through trees. The dead are buried on the mountain so that their spirits can watch over the town. The corpse is covered with earth, then cement. As the tomb ages, the cement gradually crumbles and the earth reappears. Christians and Buddhists orientate their tombs towards the north, Moslems towards the west — that is, towards the holy city of Mecca in Saudi Arabia.

It was old Professor Li who told us about the cemetery. He also told us to visit a Catholic church, apparently the only church in China with a cross. Its bell came from France. Professor Li expressed himself well in French. He talked to us about the 'Cultural Revolution', about the irreparable damage done to relics and artworks. He did not say much, just sighing deeply before taking up the thread of his story again. 'It's better now. Dali is better off again, and people know they are privileged to live in such a beautiful region,' he said.

We also went to Wase, a typical small village on the eastern side of the lake,

much quieter than Dali. Before taking the boat you have to walk for a long way through the fields. When we were there, the wheat had been harvested, making way for rice; the soil was being turned over, the land irrigated. Later, the seedlings need to be transplanted and thinned out. What patience you need for such a job!

So, after our walk through the fields, we took a boat together with Bai people returning home with great loads of wood and vegetables — especially cabbages. Women carried heavy wicker baskets on their back; they walked with difficulty, bent over. The most difficult part was to climb up on to the very rudimentary gang plank — a narrow board with one end resting on the boat, the other on rocks in the water. We found ourselves on deck in a jumble of goods and people and ended up sitting on cabbages.

In the village, people working in the last rays of evening light looked at us with curiosity and greeted us. There is only a single hotel there for foreigners and a few small restaurants. As we ate our rice, we thought back to the farmers we had seen working in mud up to their knees....

At dawn we took the boat back to Dali and profited from the early-morning light to take some gorgeous photos of the rice paddies bordering Lake Erhai.

It was through Professor Li that Kader (my companion) met Gu Shenlan and her family last year. She sometimes represents her minority group, the Lisu, at meetings in Dali. We wanted to give her some photos we had taken the previous year. Since we could hardly just hang around until she turned up, we decided to pay her a surprise visit in the mountains where she has her home.

We set out more or less at hazard. Knowing that she lived somewhere near Fengyi, we took the road hoping to find the right path once we were in the mountains. Thanks to Kader's skills and some good luck, we did indeed come across the lady we were seeking, close to a tiny hamlet. The Lisu can be recognized by their voluminous black turbans. Gu Shenlan wears her traditional dress all the time: embroidered indigo-dyed blouse, long skirt held up by a broad woven belt, and a turban as wide across as her shoulders.

We had a great reunion. Gu Shenlan wanted new family portraits taken, so we obliged. Despite the children's shyness at the beginning, the atmosphere soon

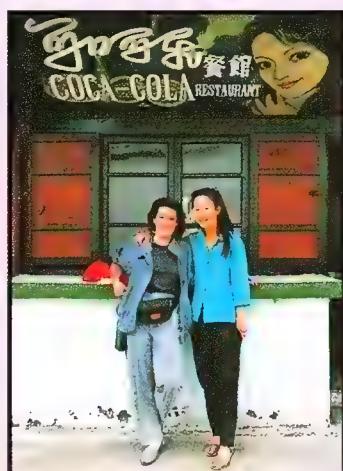
Photos by Kader Mallek



Dali's Catholic church



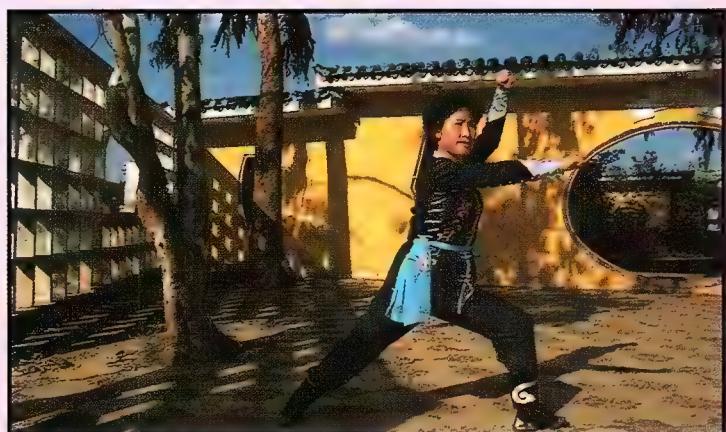
Theatrical troupe in action



The writer with the proprietor's niece at a popular Dali restaurant



Painting on marble



Wushu in Daguan Park



A nomad on the mountain
(by Sylvie St. Laurent)

became very gay and lively. Then came a feast of pork, semolina, and vegetables — everything highly spiced and washed down with very strong tea. Unfortunately, we had communication problems. The little Mandarin we knew helped a bit, but we knew nothing about the dialect of the Lisu. They could read Chinese characters, but did not speak Mandarin, and we were unable to write it! In short, it was a non-verbal party. Gu's sons played music on the flute and a type of woodwind instrument fitted with pipes, a *lusheng*, something like bagpipes. To stress the rhythm the musicians executed dance steps as they played. Our Lisu friend was moved, and so were we. We played back their music after recording it on my Walkman. Her husband was absent, perhaps working in distant fields. But she was hardly bereft of company — she has a fine family.

The sun went down behind the mountain. Gu Shenlan insisted that we stay the night. The road was long and we were exhausted. Without too much urging, we were happy to accept her hospitality. Before going to sleep, we had yet another surprise: the table was set by candlelight. After working in the fields all day, these people have a very hearty appetite. They are poor but able to eat their fill. We were served more than generously (in fact, we were fit to burst!).

The bedrooms were in another building similar to the first but larger. These houses are made of dried earth (adobe) with a thatched roof and a wooden door but no windows. To get there, we had to take to the mountain path again. It was quite a climb.... The sons saw to it that we lacked for nothing. There was a bed with a quilt, a mosquito net, a wooden chest where we could dump our bags, a petroleum lamp, even hot water.

After a good night's sleep, we went to find our hosts who accompanied us back down the mountain to the first house. They offered us honey, tea, and a dish of semolina. We tried to exchange a few words as best we could. Gu Shenlan wanted us to stay longer, but we didn't like to abuse her hospitality. This time we will send her the photos (it's a long way from Montreal to a Yunnan village!).

We descended the mountain path, then took the road to Xiaguan, where we wandered around the market for a while before returning to Dali. Then, minds filled with wonderful memories, hearts at rest, in the true explorer spirit we left to seek out new mysteries.

Sylvie St. Laurent

Translated by J.M.

TRAVEL NOTES

CAAC Flights Hong Kong — Guangzhou

Route	Days of Week	Dep.	Arr.	Flight No.
Hong Kong — Guangzhou	1 3 4 5 6 7	10:10	10:45	CA302
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	20:55	21:30	CA306
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	18:10	18:55	CA320
	2	13:20	13:55	CA312
Guangzhou — Hong Kong	1 3 4 5 6 7	08:40	09:15	CA301
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	19:30	20:05	CA305
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	08:25	09:00	CA319
	2	08:00	08:35	CA311

(valid from summer to autumn, 1989)

Average Climatic Conditions In Pearl River Delta

		Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Guangzhou	Temperature (°C)	13.3	14.4	17.9	21.9	25.6	27.2	28.4	28.1	26.9	23.7	19.4	15.2
	Rainfall (mm)	36.9	54.5	80.7	175.0	293.8	287.8	212.7	232.5	189.3	69.2	37.0	24.7
Shunde	Temperature (°C)	13.1	14.3	18.0	22.0	25.9	27.4	28.7	28.4	27.0	23.7	19.6	15.2
	Rainfall (mm)	33.1	56.1	69.4	165.9	241.1	275.1	197.9	295.3	216.2	49.6	42.7	14.9
Zhongshan	Temperature (°C)	13.1	14.3	18.3	22.4	25.8	27.2	28.4	28.1	26.8	23.2	19.2	15.2
	Rainfall (mm)	32.7	57.1	60.2	140.1	247.5	301.7	220.1	241.9	218.8	54.3	42.1	17.3
Zhuhai	Temperature (°C)	14.5	14.7	17.8	21.9	26.2	27.5	28.7	28.5	27.7	25.1	21.3	17.2
	Rainfall (mm)	26.2	49.2	57.9	136.3	191.7	399.7	252.4	298.0	278.1	91.0	27.0	17.0
Dongguan	Temperature (°C)	13.4	15.0	18.0	22.2	25.5	27.2	28.2	28.0	26.7	23.6	20.0	15.7
	Rainfall (mm)	35.1	67.1	80.2	175.9	263.2	314.4	244.2	284.7	199.6	63.3	29.5	14.3

Selected Attractions in the Pearl River Delta

The Pearl River Delta covers an area of more than 10,000 square kilometres. Within its bounds it includes Guangzhou, Foshan, Jiangmen, Zhuhai, Nanhai, Panyu, Shunde, Zhongshan, Doumen, Hong Kong, Macau, Xinhui, Gaohe, Sanshui, Zengcheng, Dongguan, and part of Shenzhen. The delta is rich in historical associations and natural beauty. The following are just some of the interesting places not already covered in our major articles.

Guangzhou

One of China's oldest cities, capital of Guangdong Province, Guangzhou has for over a thousand years been one of the main gateways to China. There are a number of temples and monuments well worth visiting.

Guangxiao Temple This temple is one of the oldest in the city, the earliest temple on the site having been built 1,800 years ago. It has particular significance for Buddhists since Hui Neng, sixth patriarch of the Chan (Zen) Sect and leader of the Southern School, became a novice here in 676.

Liurongsi (Temple of the Six Banyan Trees) The temple was built during the

sixth century and rebuilt under the Song towards the end of the tenth century. Within the compound rises the octagonal Flower Pagoda, at 57.6 metres the oldest and tallest in Guangzhou.

Huaisheng Mosque The original mosque on this site, the earliest in China, is said to have been established in 627 by the first Moslem missionary to China. At that time Guangzhou was home to many Arab merchants. In the grounds of the mosque is a minaret 36.3 metres high known as the Guangta (Smooth Tower).

Chen Family Temple This complex, built between 1890 and 1894, is noted for its architecture, which represents the finest in Guangdong craftsmanship. It covers an area of 13,200 square metres. All the halls, courtyards, corridors and rooms, not to mention the doors, windows, bannisters, roof ridges, etc., are liberally decorated with carvings in stone, wood and brick. The complex also contains fine examples of Guangdong glazed pottery, clay sculpture and ironwork.

Mausoleum of the 72 Martyrs Constructed in 1912 and then extended in 1919 with funds donated by Overseas Chinese, this mausoleum in the northeast of the city commemorates the abortive uprising of March 29 1911, which resulted in the loss of seventy-two lives, at the time of the 1911 Revolution. The mausoleum is located on Huanghuagang (Yellow Flower Hill) in lovely gardens and woodlands.

Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall On the eastern side of Jiefang Road, south of Yuexiu Park, there is a monument and

Major Hotels in Pearl River Delta

City/County	Name	Address	Telephone
Guangzhou	China Hotel	Liuhua Road	666888
	Garden Hotel	368 Huansi Road, E.	338999
	White Swan Hotel	1 Shamian Street, S.	886968
	Liuhua Hotel	194 Huansi Road, W.	668800
	Guangzhou Hotel	Haizhou Square	661556
	Central Hotel	38 Guoji Road, Sanyuanli	678331
	Baiyun Hotel	367 Huansi Road, E.	333998
	Ocean Hotel	412 Huansi Road, E.	765988
	Hua An Hotel	162 Taikang Road	333888
	Delux Palace Hotel	89 Huansi Road, W.	678678
Nanhai County	Novotel Hotel	384 Jiangnan Road, C.	429645
	Handan Mansion	Baiyun Cave, Xiqiaoshan	57388
	Sanhu Hotel	(ditto)	57488
	Taoyuan Hotel	(ditto)	—
	Xiqiaoshan Hotel	(ditto)	—
Shunde County	Xianquan Hotel	Shunfengshan Tourist Centre	26688
	China Tourism Hotel (CTS)	47 New Road, Daliang	23028
Zhongshan	Zhongshan Hot Springs Resort	Sanxiang	24019
	King Hu Hotel	Qiguan Road, E., Shiqi	24688
	Zhongshan International Hotel	2 Zhongshan Road, Shiqi	24788
	Fuhua Hotel	West Sunwen Road, Shiqi	22034
	Cuiheng Hotel	Cuiheng Village	24091
Dongguan	China Tourism Hotel (CTS)	4 Hexi Road, Guancheng	23824
Zhuhai	Zhuhai Resort	Jingshan Road	333718
	Zhuhai Holiday Resort	Shihiushan	332038
	Zhuhai Holiday Resort Hotel	(ditto)	—
	Huaqiao Mansion	4 Water Bay, Gongbei	85777
	Huaqiao Hotel	Yingbin Road, Gongbei	86788
Shenzhen	China Tourism Hotel (CTS)	Haibin Road, S.	22208
	Shenzhen Bay Hotel	'Overseas Chinese Town', Shafe	770111
	Wah Chung International Hotel	40 Renmin Road, S.	338060
	East Lake Hotel	Shenzhen Reservoir District	222727
	East Building of Honey Lake Country Club	Honey Lake	745057
	Bamboo Garden Hotel	Dongmen Road	222934
	Xili Lake Holiday Resort	Nantou District	23711
	Silver Lake Tourist Centre	Bijishan	22827
	Nan Hai Hotel	Shekou Industrial Zone	92888
	Songtao Hotel	Wansong Hill, Seven Star Crags	24412
Zhaoqing	Xingyan Hotel	Seven Star Crags	24101
	Huaqiao Mansion	90 Tianning Road, N.	22952
	Friendship Hotel	Gongnong Road, N.	25830

memorial theatre dedicated to Dr Sun Yat-sen, leader of the 1911 Revolution. The memorial theatre with its roof of blue tiles from nearby Shiwan in Foshan seats 5,000 people and is used for rallies and cultural events. It was built in 1931.

Panyu

The **Yuying Mountain Villa** at Nancun in Panyu County is one of the four most famous gardens in Guangdong Province. It was laid out in 1864 in the Qing dynasty in the subtle, compact style of the gardens south of the River Yangtse — as seen in Suzhou, for example. It covers an area of 1,598 square metres.

Foshan

Just 28 kilometres southwest of Guangzhou is Foshan, one of China's most important folkcrafts centres and often featured in tour itineraries as a day trip from Guangzhou.

Here, the **Zhu Miao (Taoist Ancestral Temple)** is not to be missed. This ornate structure from the Song dynasty (960-1279) was built entirely of interlocking wooden beams; no metal or nails were used in its construction. Its roofs bear particularly fine examples of the local Shiwan pottery. It stands in grounds covering an area of 3,000 square metres.

Xinhui

Bird Paradise at Xinhui presents one of the most fantastic natural sights in the Pearl River Delta. An island in the River Tianma, it boasts a 500-year-old banyan tree with luxuriant foliage which is home to thousands of egrets. At nightfall, when some leave and some return to roost, this is a marvellous spectacle.

Humen

Located at the spot where the Zhujiang (Pearl River) widens to form its estuary,

Humen was a centre of resistance during the Opium Wars (1839-1842). Today one can visit a monument and the **Lin Zexu Memorial Hall** (Lin Zexu was the imperial commissioner in charge of keeping opium out of China).

Zhongshan

Cuiheng in Zhongshan was the birthplace of Dr Sun Yat-sen (1866-1925). His former home, the **Sun Yat-sen House**, still stands in the village; it was built in 1892 combining Chinese and European styles, although the interior is traditional. Opposite is the **Sun Yat-sen Museum**, with exhibits on his life and times.

Thirty kilometres from Zhongshan, the **Zhongshan Hot Springs** have modern, comfortable accommodation offering hot-spring bathtubs in some guestrooms.

Train Schedules Kowloon — Guangzhou

94	92	98	96	Train No.	91	93	95	97
				Station	Kowloon	Guangzhou		
14:35	12:35	09:45	08:15		11:08	12:58	18:59	21:13
17:13	15:13	12:30	10:48		08:30	10:20	16:26	18:40

Ferry Schedules to and from Hong Kong

Destination	Boat Name/Type	Departure		Hours (Approx.)	Tariff (HK\$)	
		From H.K.	Return		From H.K.	To H.K.
Guangzhou	Hovercraft (disembark at Zhoutouzui)	08:40 08:50 09:00	13:15 13:30 14:00	3	125—155	117
	Hovercraft (disembark at Huangpu)	09:45 13:15	14:45 17:30	2½	130	115
	Longjin	07:45	14:30	3	130	117
	Tianhu (disembark at Zhoutouzui)	Odd days 21:00 (no service on 31st)	Even days 21:00	10	1st class: 136 2nd class: 116 3rd class: 86	1st class: 114 2nd class: 94
	Xinghu (disembark at Zhoutouzui)	Even days 21:00	Odd days 21:00 (no service on 31st)	10	Deluxe class: 196 1st class: 161 2nd class: 116 3rd class: 86	Deluxe class: 174 1st class: 139 2nd class: 94
Zhaoqing	Xijianglun	Odd days 19:30 (no service on 31st)	Even days 19:00	9	Deluxe class: 239 1st class: 203 2nd class: 182 3rd class: 132	1st class: 153 2nd class: 123
	Duanzhouhu	Even days 08:45	Odd days 13:30	5	176	130
Zhongshan	Xiulihu	07:30 13:00	10:30 16:30	1½	102	80
	Yixianhu	08:40 14:00	11:45 16:45	1½	102	80
Zhuhai	Hovercraft	07:45 11:00 14:00	09:30 13:00 17:00	1	97—107	65—75
Shekou	Hovercraft (embark at China Ferry Terminal, Tsim Sha Tsui)	08:00 10:15 15:30	09:15 14:30 17:00	½	55	40
	Hovercraft (embark at Macau Ferry Terminal, Central)	08:10 09:30 14:00 16:20	08:15 10:45 15:10 16:45			

NEWS

National Art Exhibition

The Ministry of Culture and the China Artists Association are jointly holding the seventh national art exhibition covering nine categories, including traditional Chinese paintings, sculptures and watercolours. Entries will be displayed in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Nanjing and other major cities from May 20 onwards and the award-winning works will be exhibited at the China Art Gallery in Beijing for a month from September 5 1989.

Museum of Rock Paintings

Construction of the Museum of Ancient Rock Paintings – a first for China – was recently concluded at Linhe in the Bayannur League in the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region. Due to open to the public this August, the museum will provide a home for 10,000 rock paintings from the Yinsan Mountains, as well as display rubbings and photos of the finds. Such paintings from the Inner Mongolia and Ningxia Hui Autonomous Regions are thought to be connected with the sun worship practised by nomadic tribes in ancient times.

More Public Toilets!

Following the Chinese capital's preoccupation with public conveniences over the past year, Shanghai is now to build seventy more in busy central business areas such as Nanjing Road, Huaihai Road, Sichuan Road and the Jinling Road area, as well as near major tourist attractions such as the Yuyuan Garden and the Bund. Seven of them will also have washing facilities, a lounge area with sofas, and air-conditioning.

Northwest Yunnan Beauty Spot

Groups are now permitted to visit the recently opened Sanjiang Bingliu (Three Rivers Running Together) in northwestern Yunnan. The three rivers are the Lancang, the Jinsha and the Nujiang. This is a place of high snowy peaks, rushing torrents, luxuriant forests, imposing temples and monasteries, and offers many interesting ethnic insights.

Series on Traditional Chinese Medicine

The Shanghai Traditional Chinese Medicine College Press is to publish a series of twelve books under the title *A Practical English-Chinese Library of Traditional Chinese Medicine*. The twelve volumes will cover basic theory, diagnosis, *materia medica*, prescriptions, clinic, acupuncture and moxibustion, massage, health preservation and rehabilitation, medicated diet treatment and *qigong*. Incorporating the latest research findings, the books are the product of cooperation between dozens of professors, scholars, researchers, translators and editors from Shandong, Jiangsu and Shanghai.

Special Express to Chengde

A special express train is now carrying visitors from Beijing to the former Qing imperial summer resort at Chengde in northeastern Hebei Province. Besides the imperial palace, Chengde boasts a splendid group of buildings displaying architectural characteristics of sundry minority peoples, such as the Putuo Zongcheng Palace which is a replica of the Potala in Lhasa.

The special express, which has replaced trains nos. 91/92, has three soft-seat carriages and eleven hard-seat ones, excellent service and closed-circuit TV. It leaves Beijing daily at 7:00 am, reaching Chengde slightly after noon. For the return trip, departure from Chengde is at 1:00 pm, and the train arrives in Beijing just before 6:00 pm.

Han Archives on Ox Bones

Xi'an archaeologists are reportedly excited by the discovery of archives of the Western Han dynasty (206 B.C.-A.D. 24) in the ruins of a building in the imperial palace. The archives, comprising hundreds of thousands of characters on more than 30,000 pieces of ox bone, record tributes paid by local officials and give information on local government, officers and tradesmen.

The dig site in a northwestern suburb of the Shaanxi capital, almost 135 metres from north to south and 65.5 metres from east to west, is surrounded by walls more than 1.5 metres thick. A ditch running across divided the area into two courtyards, each containing thirteen houses. The courtyards also yielded weapons, tools and household articles, but the major finds were these bone inscriptions, which are said to fill gaps in historical data on the Western Han.

Manchurian Tiger Extinct?

The China Society for Animal Protection fears that the Manchurian tiger, whose habitat is northeastern China, may have become extinct in the wild. A survey conducted in the 1970s revealed just seven wild specimens, and an aerial survey in 1989 could find no signs of wild tigers at all. Denudation of the forests and indiscriminate hunting have been blamed. However, there are still more than twenty Manchurian tigers and forty South China tigers in China's zoos.

Acupuncture Standards

The International Acupuncture Proficiency Test Commission has been established in Beijing to promote traditional acupuncture techniques and set standards. Acupuncture is now practised in 120 countries; the commission hopes to provide testing for acupuncturists from all over the world.

China World Trade Centre Nears Completion

What will be China's largest, most comprehensive commercial development – the China World Trade Centre – is taking shape in Beijing.

The 21-storey, 743-room **China World Hotel** is expected to open in the autumn of 1989. The deluxe hotel will have two executive floors, a business centre, Chinese, Japanese, French and other restaurants and recreation, fitness and entertainment areas, as well as extensive conference and banqueting facilities.

The second hotel in the complex will be the **Trader Hotel**, a 298-room business hotel intended to provide excellent value for money.

The complex also includes the Exhibition Centre, two 37-storey international apartment towers, 14,000 square metres of retail space and no less than fifteen additional restaurants. Located on Jianguomenwai Avenue in the vicinity of embassies and existing hotels, this complex and its amenities should prove a magnet for many visitors apart from business executives.

International Train Tickets

Travellers should note that tickets for international through trains are not available from railway stations in China. To book tickets for the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of Mongolia, Poland, Rumania, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, the German Democratic Republic, etc., you must go to a branch of China International Travel Service (CITS). CITS can make reservations as much as a month ahead of time, even longer for group travel. A deposit is required at the time of booking, but this will be refunded when you collect your tickets (normally five days before departure).

In Beijing, CITS has set up the United Travel Related Service Centre in the western hall of the Beijing International Hotel to assist foreign travellers with reservations and ticketing in this connection.

Air Travel News

China's State Council recently approved the formal opening of the airport at Zhengzhou, capital of Henan Province in the Central Plains, to large aircraft from Hong Kong. The flight from Hong Kong to Zhengzhou takes two hours.

A second direct weekly flight has now been added between Sichuan's Chongqing and Hong Kong to meet demand. Flights are every Monday and Thursday.

Meanwhile, CITS Air Service HK Ltd. has opened up a new air route between Hong Kong and Harbin, capital of Heilongjiang Province, in the far northeast. This is its seventeenth route to date.

TV Series on Marriage in China

An ambitious forty-part television series is currently being produced in Beijing which will focus on the marriage ceremonies and customs of all of China's fifty-six nationalities, large and small.

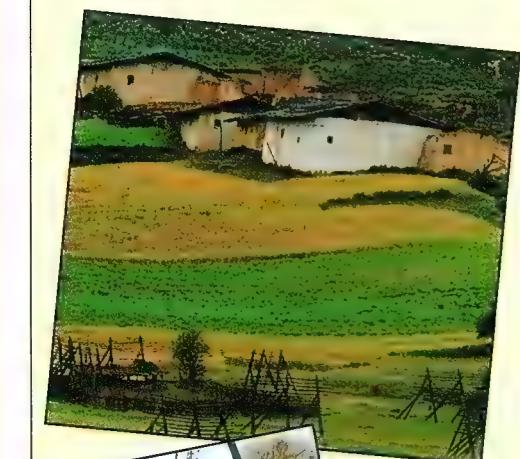
The series is meant as a documentary but will apparently also involve some acting to enliven the storyline. Each instalment will last for one hour. A photographic album is also to be produced in conjunction with the series which, it is hoped, will stimulate interest from other countries.

Hotel News

Following on from the Hyatt Tianjin, Hyatt International's newest project in China is the 450-room **Hyatt Xian**. Scheduled to open during the first quarter of 1990, this hotel is located in a prime shopping and sightseeing area in Xi'an, capital of Shaanxi Province. It should be a relaxing place to stay, with a pleasant blend of Chinese and Western influences, while reflecting the typical architecture of Shaanxi.

In Taiwan, the 1,000-room **Hyatt Regency Taipei** is part of the new Taipei World Trade Centre. It is expected to open later this summer and will feature the Regency Club with facilities especially designed for the business traveller.

NEXT ISSUE



YUNNAN'S HENGDUAN RANGE

An extension of the Himalayas, the Hengduan Range in northwestern Yunnan consists of several parallel mountain chains divided by deep gorges through which run the turbulent upper reaches of some of Asia's major rivers. Still not completely open to tourism, this region of exceptional beauty bordering on Burma is home to Tibetans, but also to smaller minorities such as the Nu, Dêrnang, Lisu and Drung:

- Timeless Plateau: Zhongdian
- Into the Gorge of the Nujiang
- The Tibetans of Dêqên
- Mountain Lamaseries

Plus:

- Chaozhou's Ancient Charm (Guangdong)
- Zhangye's Big, Big Buddha (Gansu)

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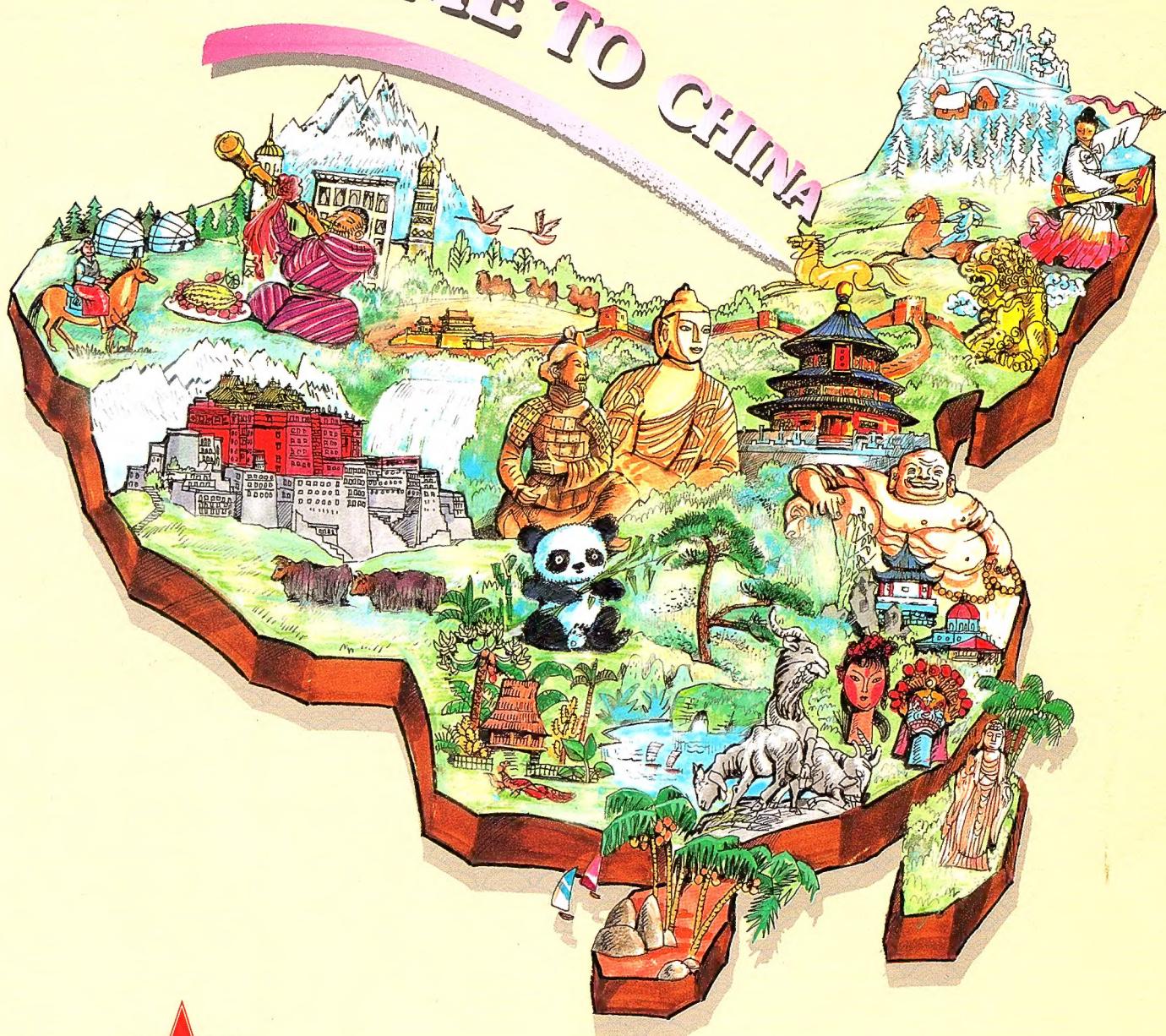
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